DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EDD)

Coming home to a strange land: Empowering Ethiopian immigrant students by teaching self-determination skills: The case of an intervention programme in a youth village in Israel

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Award date:
2004

Awarding institution:
University of Bath

Coming Home to a Strange Land

EMPOWERING ETHIOPIAN IMMIGRANT STUDENTS BY TEACHING SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS

The Case of an Intervention Programme in a Youth Village in Israel

Submitted by Shoshana Veitzman

In fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Ed.D

University of Bath

December 2004

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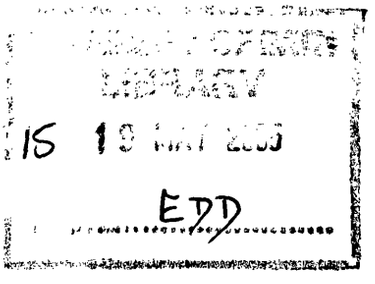
EDD

DEDICATED WITH LOVE

TO MY HUSBAND SHRAGA

AND

TO MY CHILDREN

EYAL, KEREN AND MEITAL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to a number of people without whom this research would not have been possible.

To my supervisor Dr. Felicity Wikeley for her patient supervision throughout the various stages of this study, her insightful and constructive remarks that guided me safely throughout this "journey".

To Professor Shunit Reiter for her trust and support of this study.

To my devoted implementers Anat and Etti for their trust in me and their willingness to contribute their free time and share with me their thoughts and opinions.

To the teachers for their contribution during the course of the research, for their faith and trust in me and for the opportunity to learn from them about the complexity of the question of immigrant absorption and education.

To the students I met at school, for their participation and cooperation in this study, teaching me, and sharing with me their experiences.

To Sam Berris a friend and colleague for his support and helpful comments.

To Hana Raz for her genuine interest and help.

To the Ed.D programme staff at the University of Bath for their professional guidance and help during the courses.

To Gill Brook- Taylor, whose assistance along the way made me feel "at home" in the department and that any problem could be solved.

To my friends and colleagues at work, who encouraged me, and gave me much good advice.

Last but not least to my family for their support and encouragement along the way which inspired me with the confidence to continue and complete this project.

ABSTRACT

This case study contributes to the investigation of immigrant education, and extends the knowledge base about self determination, through the investigation of an intervention to promote self-determination skills of Ethiopian adolescent immigrants to Israel. The thesis presents a teaching model designed to impart self-determination skills for students with a variety of learning difficulties and evaluates its effectiveness with culturally different students.

One of the salient manifestations of the severe absorption difficulties experienced by Ethiopian immigrants can be observed in the educational system. Immigrant children from Ethiopia encounter a wide range of problems, including language and learning difficulties, and problems of communication with the pedagogical staff. The term "passive", which is often used by teachers to describe the Ethiopian students in this school, clearly indicates that these children are not equipped with skills of self- determination. The desire and ability to exercise control over one's destiny is central to adaptation to Israeli (and Western) culture. Without providing an education that endows Ethiopian students with self-determination skills, they would find it very difficult to function and ultimately integrate successfully into Israeli society.

The thesis addresses the following research questions:

1. Is the Internalization Teaching Model capable of enhancing self-determination in culturally different students?
2. What are the conditions that hinder or facilitate the learning of the students in this case?

The research findings indicate that the fact that the students did not make significant progress following the intervention programme was not necessarily the result of their possessing limited learning skills, or of their unwillingness to invest an effort in school tasks; they highlighted the lack of the teachers' interest, efforts and ability to challenge students from a different social and economic background. To enable students from a different background to learn and progress, teachers may have to change their teaching styles, attitudes and behaviour, and the thesis calls for changes in the school system to encourage and facilitate the teachers' development.

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"Those who relate to people as they are,
make them worse than they really are;
those who relate to people, as they would like to be,
help them become what they are able to be."

Goethe

GLOSSARY

Key terms unique to Israel:

Absorbed – Immigrants who come to Israel are said to be "absorbed" into the local population.

Absorbers – The local population into which the immigrants are absorbed.

Absorption – The complex and prolonged process of the new immigrants' struggle to adjust to Israeli society from personal, familial, cultural and economic viewpoints, and their interaction with the absorbing population.

Aliya – The Hebrew term referring to the immigration of Jews from the Diaspora to Israel, which applies to all Jews moving to Israel.

Integration – When used in Hebrew, this term has a negative connotation, as it is associated in many people's minds with a somewhat unsuccessful educational reform, aimed at integrating students from different socio-economic levels, with diverse scholastic achievements and belonging to various ethnic communities within one school, in order to advance the weak students and reduce academic and social gaps.

Sabra – The name of a cactus fruit growing in Israel, used figuratively to define native-born Israelis. This value-laden term describes what is perceived as the prototype of the proud Israeli who, like the fruit, is prickly on the outside and sweet and gentle on the inside.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to examine the problems related to the integration of secondary school immigrant students from Ethiopia within the Israeli educational system. It examines the policy of the Israeli educational system and its implementation in the particular school under investigation, aimed at promoting skills that may lead to the successful integration of this community within Israeli society. One of the salient manifestations of the severe absorption difficulties experienced by the Ethiopian immigrants can be observed in the educational system. The target population encounters a wide range of problems, including language and learning difficulties, and problems of communication with the pedagogical staff. All these have generated the urgent need for an intervention programme.

The number of Ethiopian Jews who have immigrated to Israel since 1977 is relatively small, but their immigration and absorption has been dramatic and has unique features. It is an interesting phenomenon, not only in its own right, but also because it shares, and often highlights, many features common to worldwide migrations in the late 20th century. It is a migration from south to north (from the Third World to Western civilisation); of black people into a predominantly white society; relocation, primarily of the young and the fit, inspired by a utopian dream of life fulfilment, a dream sorely tested, if not shattered, by the experience of arrival in the "Promised Land." The dream, has deep roots in the traditional culture of Ethiopian Jews, but their heightened expectations can be compared with those of other immigrant groups having more typical secular aspirations, such as economic advancement and self-actualisation.

Working as a teacher mentor in schools with a large population of Ethiopian immigrants, I became aware of their learning difficulties and realised that their integration into schools is fraught with considerable problems. Teachers I met spoke of low motivation, helplessness, lack of interest and mainly passivity as reasons for their poor scholastic achievements. I began asking myself why they were not progressing like children of other immigrant groups who arrived in Israel around the same time. What were the obstacles? Are we teaching them in a way that enables them to learn? With these questions in mind, I set out on my "journey" – the quest to understand this phenomenon. However, I was not driven solely by scholarly

curiosity, but also by the hope that in the future we shall find better ways of integrating immigrants and immigrant children into Israeli schools.

Working at a teachers' college, my decision was reinforced by the literature, which substantiates the need for teacher education institutions to become responsible for and committed to equity issues. Zeichner (1989, p. 9) wrote:

> *"Although we have a need for intellectually capable teachers... we also have a need for culturally sensitive, compassionate and morally responsible teachers who are able to actively engage in the struggle to provide an education that helps all children have access to decent and rewarding lives."*

The present study, the first of its kind in Israel, serves as a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of a model designed to enhance self determination skills in young adults – immigrants from Ethiopia.

The study focuses on the difficulties encountered by this group of immigrants and proposes a solution that is more than merely academic, through an intervention programme designed to promote Ethiopian students' self-determination skills, considered crucial for their subsequent integration into Israeli society. The teaching of self-determination skills has never been a part of the Israeli school curriculum, nor has the lack of such a distinctive feature ever been associated with the scholastic difficulties of Ethiopian immigrant students. This makes the study innovative and potentially useful – not just within the Israeli context.

The opening chapter will deal with theoretical issues related to immigrant absorption in general, and in Israel in particular. It will provide essential background information about immigrant absorption in Israel. The second chapter will focus on the problems of the absorption of Ethiopian immigrant children within the Israeli educational system. Since schools typically provide the first sustained contact of the immigrant population with the new culture, and academic outcomes are a powerful measure of current adjustment and of future psychological development and practical functioning (Steinberg, 1996), how immigrant children fare in school will in many cases predict their contribution as members of our society. The need for instructional emphasis on self-determination skills may be found to be crucial for immigrant youth from Ethiopia.

The third chapter will review the existing literature on self-determination from various points of view, examine the concepts 'cultural difference' and 'cultural deprivation', the socialisation process, pertinent developmental aspects of adolescence, and will suggest the theoretical framework best suited for an examination of this population for the purpose of this study.

The fourth chapter will present the specific aims of the intervention along with the related research questions, outline the proposed intervention programme, and describe the teaching model.

The fifth chapter will discuss the method chosen in this study, describe the situation, the research tools implemented and the procedures used to analyse the outcome of the intervention programme.

The sixth chapter will include the presentation, of the findings.

The seventh chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the findings.

The final chapter will deal with the conclusions drawn from this study, pointing out its limitations, and make suggestions for future implementation of the proposed intervention programme and further research.

Hopefully, the findings of this study will help policy-makers and teachers to introduce important changes into the education provided in Israel today – not only to Ethiopian immigrants – and make a difference in the lives of young adults with learning difficulties by enhancing their ability to lead a life of quality. Moreover, this study may contribute to the accumulative knowledge and practice of education in general, and to the education of immigrant children in particular, and thus be instrumental in enhancing the teachers' role in conjunction with that of the policy-makers, particularly within the Israeli educational system. Finally, several ideas for future research studies will be suggested, aimed at identifying home and schooling conditions hindering or facilitating learning by children, whether immigrant children worldwide, or Ethiopian children in Israel.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON IMMIGRATION RELATED TO THE ISRAELI CONTEXT

This chapter will focus on the general concept of immigration, pay specific attention to immigration to Israel, and deal with the uniqueness of immigration from Ethiopia.

1.1 Overview of Approaches to Immigration

Immigration denotes the relocation of an individual or a group of people from one country to another, a universal phenomenon. The second half of the 20th century could rightly be labelled as the century of migration (Bar-Yosef, 2001), as vast numbers of people moved from their country of origin to other countries in the hope of a better life. According to a new report by the United Nations Population Division, approximately 175 million people lived outside their country of birth in the year 2000, more than double the number in 1970 (Radhika, 2003). Migration involves a permanent change, not only in place of residence, but also more significantly in lifestyles, values, norms and language. This process of adjusting to a new society is by nature multidimensional, multifaceted and complex (Eisenstadt, 1954; Berry, 1997).

Migration literature tends to focus on people at either end of the migration process, i.e., while they are still in their country of origin or after having arrived at their destination. The problems and experiences associated with immigration and immigrants have been discussed in professional literature from the various perspectives of anthropology, education, psychology, sociology, economics and geography. Among other things, they have dealt with the broad trends in population movements and their economic implications. Bar-Yosef (2001) claims that for immigrants, separation from their roots, culture and social ties is very traumatic. No less traumatic is the entry into a new society. Cohon (1981) claims that although researchers from different disciplines have shed light on some of the phenomena of migration, they have also contributed to a state of confusion owing to their numerous theories and their overlapping definitions. Furthermore, most models have been developed with adult immigrants in mind, and, as Aronowitz (1984) points out,

models and theories developed for adults are not always readily applicable to children and adolescents. Children, especially young children, do not always understand the reasons why their parents migrated from their familiar surroundings. They are seldom consulted about the doubts, motivation or actual decision to immigrate.[1] These children, brought along by their parents, suffer the tribulations of migrating without the mitigating effects of adult reasoning (Bar-Yosef, 2001).

According to Cohon (1981), many terms are used to describe the migration process and its consequences: absorption, assimilation, incorporation, acculturation and integration. Even though these terms are almost interchangeable, they also suggest the complexity, ambiguity and arguments surrounding the issue of immigration (Korac, 2001). Interchangeable terms also exist to describe the people involved, such as immigrants, emigrants and migrants. The distinction is not straightforward since often it is not simply a matter of "geography" or "intent." The term *immigration*, as used in this study, will refer to the process of moving across national boundaries in order to resettle permanently in another country. *Emigration* is the process of moving from one country to another, with the possibility of returning to one's original homeland. *Migration*, on the other hand, refers to the process of moving from one location to another; it tends to refer to rural and economically disadvantaged populations (Rothenberg 1998). In the USA many migrant families leave their home base in late spring or early summer and do not return again until the following November.

The transition involved in immigration has been described as either a potentially positive experience, offering opportunities for personal growth and development, or a negative experience endangering one's identity (Bar-Yosef, 1998). This negative experience is sometimes referred to as culture shock (Garza-Guerrero, 1974), a phenomenon that may occur upon entering a strange and unpredictable cultural environment, resulting in stress and possibly also family conflicts. Greenberg and Greenberg (1989) describe such a situation, but refer to it as "mourning" over what has been left behind. For immigrants, even if from a country relatively similar to the host country, the process of entering a new society and culture is

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[1] I chose to use the term *immigrate*, because in the Israeli literature about immigration this term is used to indicate destination, as opposed to the term *emigrate*, which means to leave a country. For example, the Ethiopian Jews emigrated from Ethiopia to immigrate to Israel.

multidimensional and complex, involving aspects such as a new language and new, unfamiliar customs and norms – all of which may prove overwhelming (Bar-Yosef, 2001). For immigrants such as the Ethiopian Jews, arriving in a westernised country such as Israel – in addition to the aforementioned difficulties – involves separation from ancient roots and Ethiopian culture, and is therefore quite traumatic.

Traditionally, immigration research has focused on two levels of analysis: that of the individual and that of society (Nauch & Setters, 2001). I have chosen the latter as the focus of this study. On the societal level, research has tried to understand the causes of immigration by studying the societal structure of the country of origin. Thus, for example, the literature has analysed the effects of underdevelopment and poverty, unemployment, and political and/or racial persecution on the motivation to emigrate and on immigration trends. Within the receiving society, the relationships that develop between immigrants and inhabitants, which may be regarded as an exchange process, will finally determine the level of success, or failure, of the integration. Immigrants looking for a better life expect the receiving society to demonstrate goodwill and acceptance, but this does not always materialise, largely because of differences in culture, and the desire to retain power and possession of political resources (Nauck & Settles, 2001).

According to Peterson (1968), immigration is governed by forces of "pull" (the attraction of the new host country) and "push" (the aversion felt towards the country of origin). Taking this approach, the researcher distinguishes between circumstances at home that repel migrants and those abroad that attract them. Economic and structural factors form the basis for most of the analyses in this model (Ballard & Ballard, 1977; Taylor, 1969). For example, the USA opened its doors to Third-World countries during the early 19th century and viewed it as a country where opportunities and dreams of economic stability could be realised. The substantial economic difference between the USA and the Caribbean has served as a strong "pull" factor, whereas the limited expansion of economic opportunities for professional development in the Caribbean were a strong "push" factor (Bryce-Laporte, 1983).

In their studies of recent migration to and from Europe, Eden et al. (2002) claim that both attraction and aversion are rooted in economic and political considerations. In Israel, the "push-pull" factors, which characterised immigration

throughout the last decade of the 20th century, have changed dramatically in the new millennium. For example, the relative political and economic stability in the former Soviet Union has replaced the great uncertainty that caused hundreds of thousands of people to immigrate to Israel. For most of the second half of the 1990s, Israel's economic prosperity and the veritable prospects for peace made Israel an attractive and secure choice for Jewish immigrants. The outbreak of violence in September 2000 soon marred Israel's image among potential immigrants, causing many of them to delay their immigration (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, 2002).

The "push-pull" theories have been criticised by many. Anthropologists who have reconstructed the histories of various immigrant communities clearly demonstrate that it is impossible to categorise all of the relevant factors as either "push" or "pull" (Peterson, 1968; Foner, 1977; Palmer, 1977). Others (e.g. Earle et al., 1989) have criticized the push-pull factors and claim that the "push-pull" approach often implies that people are automatically subjected to forces beyond their control, rather than active participants.-discounting the role of human agency and cultural factors (Moon, 1995). Obgu (1993a) also refers to "push-pull" forces but defines them in terms of causes of immigration. In his opinion, immigration reflects an individual's preferred choice of action due to reasons anchored in ideology, religious obligation, or simply the wish to live in "a better place." It may also result from the necessity of individuals to flee economic, political or social hazards in their countries, or be an act forced upon them. Obgu labels the first group as "voluntary minorities" – people searching for better lives and opportunities, and the second group as "involuntary minorities." Although some researchers may refer to people fleeing their countries of origin as refugees, it does not apply to the Ethiopians coming to Israel, because one cannot be a refugee in one's homeland. Leshem and Shuval (1998, p. 11) go on to explain:

> *"While it is clear that anti-Semitism and persecution have been prominent factors in motivating migration to Israel, admission to that country has never required proof such as that demanded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, that an individual left his/her country of origin because of a well founded fear of persecution. The very existence of the state has been interpreted to mean that Jews can come freely to Israel where they gain automatic citizenship and are able to live a free life as Jews. In that sense, it has been felt that refugee issues do not apply to*

Jewish immigrants to Israel, since they are engaged in a process of 'homecoming'. What is more, according to this view "Jews leaving Israel cannot claim refugee status in other countries, because their ascriptive status as Jews means that they cannot allege to have suffered persecution in their country of origin."

The Ethiopian Jews, despite centuries of isolation and oppression, preserved the Jewish religion and continuously dreamt of coming to Israel. They are the only people to have left Africa as a group of their own free will (Ben-Ezer, 1992). According to Ogbu (1993a), Ethiopian Jews can be considered a voluntary minority group. At the same time, not all the waves of immigration to Israel were voluntary minorities characterised by choice, awareness and identification with Zionism. Many immigrants from the former Soviet Union who came to Israel in the 1990s were more motivated by the need to find a way out of the hardships in their countries of origin than by the desire to live and become integrated into Israeli society.

The question of chain migration involving "social networks" such as the extended family, age, caste or some other "patterns of migration" was, and still is, widely debated (Werbner, 1990; Shaow, 1988; Ballard and Ballard, 1977). Migration literature also deals with the direction and boundaries of migration movements, e.g., from where to where, and in what area. Researchers tend to group migration movements under headings of international, regional or internal migration. While the first and the last are self-explanatory, regional migration refers to migration within a continent such as the migrant workers in the USA (Banerjee, 1981).

An extensive amount of research deals with immigrants in their new countries. Of special interest is an analysis of the mass migration waves of the 19th and early 20th centuries and the demography of migration, i.e., what happens to population size and structure in the receiving country as a result of the migration wave, as well as the impact on the demography of the country of origin (Peterson, 1968).

Other relevant aspects discussed are ethnicity, assimilation, acculturation and pluralism, and a more recent term gaining acceptance, multiculturalism. Ethnicity is used when referring to groups characterised by a common nationality, culture or language (Betancourt and Lopez, 1993). An ethnic group is a group of people identified according to common traits, customs or social norms (Gollnick and Chin,

1990). Assimilation is the process of giving up traditional ethnic identity and accepting the dominant group's culture. One of the major characteristics of the Israeli system of integrating or absorbing new immigrants has been the policy of assimilation. Sever (1997) refers to this as the "melting pot." This type of assimilation is considered problematic in Israel and has been subject to intensive criticism for decades. It is commonly viewed as an outdated theory (Glazer, 1993), stemming from the idea that ethnic groups possess "inferior" cultural traits compared to those of the receiving country, and should, therefore, undergo a process of "unlearning" (Warner & Strolle, 1945).

The successful integration of immigrants in Israel has been defined in terms of abandoning their "old ways" and becoming just like the veteran Israelis. Smooha (1978) claims that the new immigrants in Israel often suffered in the assimilation process, and according to Horowitz (1991), this situation has not changed. Israel has never adopted pluralism as an official educational policy. Swirski (1990) views Israel's educational system as adhering explicitly to assimilation. According to Ben Rafael (1996), the dominant culture in Israel has always emphasised a unifying attitude towards Jewish immigrant groups for the sake of Jewish nation building. This attitude prevailed in most of the other host societies, such as the USA, up to the 1970s. Rueschenberg and Buriel (1989), who studied the experiences of European immigrant groups to the USA, describe assimilation primarily as a unidirectional process, meaning that assimilation has occurred once immigrants have replaced their traditional cultural customs, beliefs and values with those of the new culture. However, since then it has transpired that in the long run the assimilation approach has resulted in the permanent marginalisation of large segments of the ethnic populations (Sever, 1997).

1.2 Acculturation versus Assimilation

Although acculturation and assimilation are used interchangeably, a distinctive difference exists between the two terms. Assimilation forces people to give up ideas or values in order to become part of mainstream culture. Acculturation refers to changes in an individual's behaviour, social and work activities, thinking patterns, values and self-identification as a result of contact with another culture (Gordon, 1964). According to Igoa (1995), acculturation allows an individual to

become part of mainstream culture without discarding past, meaningful traditions and values.

Phinney and Flores (2002) claim that academic disagreements exist regarding the definition of the term acculturation, and propose that two patterns can be distinguished. The first is the one-dimensional model in which acculturation is seen as a continuum ranging from complete identification with the host culture at one end to a state of complete isolation at the opposite end (Gordon, 1964). The second is the bi-dimensional model of acculturation whereby maintaining the culture of origin and acceptance of the host culture are seen as independent (Berry, 1980). This second approach has been summarised in a matrix, which introduces a model of socio-cultural interaction between immigrants and absorbers. By examining the attitudes of both sides towards the immigrants' culture of origin and towards the dominant culture, the following four types of interactions were identified: integration, assimilation, separation and marginality. Berry et al. (1989) and Neto (2002) found the above strategies to relate to other features of the acculturation process such as education, socio-economic status and language usage. Berry's model would appear to be highly congruent with the processes taking place in Israel.

Table 1.1: Attitudes to the Immigrants' Culture and the Dominant Culture (Berry, 1980)

		Host Culture	
		Identification	Rejection
Culture of Origin	Identification	Integration	Separation
	Rejection	Assimilation	Marginalisation

Defining absorption as being successful from the point of view of "assimilation" implies that immigrants renounce their language and culture of origin, and adopt the absorbing culture as quickly as possible. This is the "melting pot" ideal. On the other hand, according to the integration point of view, although immigrants are expected to adjust to the absorbing culture, the values and traditions they bring with them are respected, and legitimacy is granted to their preservation alongside the newly acquired ones. Thus, those acting in the spirit of assimilation expect immigrants to embrace the norms, language and tradition of the absorbing

society, considered superior to the immigrants' culture of origin, whereas those operating in the spirit of integration accept heterogeneity and the co-existence of both cultures.

A successful absorption process will prevent "separation," which implies a strong identification with the culture of origin and a lack of contact with the new culture or "marginality" involving both little identification with the culture of origin and lack of identification with the new culture. In Israel, while the overall climate might reflect acceptance of the Ethiopians, it does not mean that their presence has been universally welcomed. For example, in 1991 the Ministry of Education was reported to have asked its legal advisors what action to take against several parents in the Jordan Valley who refused to allow five Ethiopian children to attend a local kindergarten (Jerusalem Post, Sept. 4, 1991, News Report, p. 2). More recently, the Minister of Education threatened to withhold funds from an ultra-Orthodox boarding school that denied admission to Ethiopian children because they questioned their status as Jews (Jerusalem Post, Jan. 11, 1991, News Report. p. 12). Herzog, in a daily newspaper ("Maariv," May 28, 2003) expressed her fear that we are heading towards a policy of apartheid in education.

An integration strategy may manifest itself in explicitly multicultural societies where the dominant culture is open and characterised by a high degree of acceptance of cultural diversity along with low levels of prejudice, racism, discrimination and ethnocentrism. Societies of this kind reveal positive attitudes towards the various cultural groups, and a considerable degree of identification of the absorbed groups also exists within society at large.

For integration to take place, mutual acculturation is required. An integration strategy demands that the dominant culture also adjusts and modifies itself in order to absorb the new culture, while bearing in mind that the process of acculturation is dynamic. It is a process leading to cultural diversity, but it may also trigger prejudice and discriminative attitudes. Groups and individuals tend to employ different strategies in various spheres of life. Immigrants opting for the integration strategy stand a greater chance of positive and successful adjustment.

Berry (1997) claims that people whose culture is very different are frequently not well received in the host society and therefore do not have the opportunity of spontaneously choosing a strategy of acculturation. Pluralism refers to the readiness

of the receiving society to respect the immigrants' desire of preserving their distinctive cultural identity, and implies recognition of ethnicity as a legitimate way of grouping in a society (Shamai et al., 1998). This concept reflects the belief that the contributions of many groups strengthens and enriches society as a whole.

Multiculturalism is a concept representing a broad range of beliefs and educational approaches to achieve the goals of social equality and justice, desired by culturally diverse Western democratic societies (Eilam, 1999). Multiculturalism's doctrine of equal respect suggests recognising the contribution of all racial and ethnic groups in the field of education, as well as in other arenas, and that emphasis be placed on the importance of maintaining cultural diversity (Johnson 2003). While multiculturalism began as a movement in the field of education (according to Johnson (2003), many advocates now envision multiculturalism to be a strategic component in a broader movement toward a social transformation emphasising social equality.

Such approaches are designed to make schools more effective and meaningful to all students in order to encourage them to accept and affirm pluralism (Banks, 1993). All over the world we are witnessing the opening of borders and the free movement of large numbers of people from their countries of origin to new countries, where they hope to achieve a better life for themselves and their families. An increasing number of people move from one country to another out of choice, while others move as a result of war and persecution. However, whatever the diversity of motives, immigration involves change – not only of place of residence but also of lifestyles, values and language.

The next section will deal with the crucial stage of cultural adjustment – the need to adapt to the new environment.

1.3 Cultural Adjustment and Absorption

Migrating to another country is not an isolated traumatic experience occurring at the moment of departure from the place of origin or upon arrival at the new location. In many cases, migration can be viewed as a "cumulative" trauma with profound and lasting effects (Grinberg and Grinberg, 1984). The view of migration as a traumatic cumulative process can contribute to a better understanding of the problems that the Ethiopian community in Israel is facing today. Eisenstadt (1954)

presents a broad and multidimensional theory of migration and immigrant absorption. He defines migration as a transition from one society to another, a movement that involves three stages: 1) The motivation to immigrate: this may be due to a variety of causes, but generally involves feelings of frustration and inadequacy in the place of origin accompanied by certain expectations of the new society; 2) The physical process of migration itself; 3) The absorption process in the new society: stages in which the immigrant has to acquire new skills, learn how to act (to redefine roles), and rebuild an image of him/herself. Immigration is thus perceived as a process of "re-socialisation." Using Eisenstadt's theory, Bar-Yosef (1980) further developed the concepts of "de-socialisation" and "re-socialisation," and stated that successful absorption is a matter of a balance between the two.

The shift of immigrants from one culture to another requires an adaptation process. In his research on cultural adjustment, Fitzgerald (1974) distinguishes between social and cultural identity. He argues that social identity is dependent upon circumstances supportive of the individual's adjustment within the new context, thus facilitating the process of change. On the other hand, cultural identity exists beyond circumstantial adjustment and promotes stability, since it is the source of wider group identification (mostly ethnic), and creates a logical continuity in the individual's actions

Ethiopian Jews arrived in Israel with a heightened sense of Jewish identity and an already emerging Israeli identity (Ben-Ezer,1992). They felt that as individuals and as a community they had been tested, chosen and purified through their suffering, and had therefore earned their "right" to enter the Promised Land and become part of Israeli society. They had developed and consolidated a self-concept of a brave and resourceful people who had successfully stood up to the many challenges of the journey to Israel. They saw their arrival in Israel as a return, a restoration from the state of exile, and viewed themselves as "a part" joining the main body, to become "a whole" again. They believed that in Israel, among their fellow Jews, they would feel more fulfilled (Ben-Ezer, 1992).

Within the context of the process of adaptation, the concept most pertinent to the current study is "absorption." Many studies have attempted to define absorption and its numerous facets, and delve into the essence of the absorption process from the perspective of both sides: the immigrants and the population receiving them.

Rothenberg et al. (1995) define absorption as a process involving mutual feedback and multiple interactions among various elements. Absorption's inherent complexity is the result of multidimensional problems faced by immigrants: adjusting to a new culture and new cultural skills; acquiring a new language; struggling for social and professional recognition; reaching an appropriate standard of living; rebuilding intra-familial relationships due to the change of roles; developing appropriate social and psychological attitudes in children and adults, and helping children strike roots in their new environment, while supporting their psychological development.

Elitzur (1975) distinguishes between two aspects of absorption: economic and social. The economic aspect refers to the limitations immigrants are confronted with in their endeavours to integrate into the labour force. Job availability (depending to a large extent on the possession or lack of professional skills) and the low level of wages combined with the need to support large families (which is true of Ethiopian families) strongly affect their economic status. Socio-cultural absorption is affected by objective factors: the extent of absorption in terms of work and housing; the degree of similarity between the absorbers and the absorbed in terms of culture and physical appearance; the immigrants' socio-cultural status; the percentage of immigrants in the overall population; the crowdedness of immigrant housing; and the demographic and socio-economic status of the absorbing community.

Socio-cultural absorption is also affected by subjective factors: the extent to which immigrants' expectations about social and cultural life in the country differ from the reality they encounter; the immigrants' motivation to strike roots in the absorbing country; the absorbing community's attitudes towards the immigrants; and the social attitudes guiding those responsible for absorption both locally and nationally (Bar-Yosef, 1980). Moreover, the absorption and adjustment process is accompanied by complex mental and emotional processes, often characterised by mental distress, depending on the personal development of the individual being absorbed (Mirsky and Kaushinsky, 1989).

The issue of immigrant absorption has been studied extensively in Israel. Lissak (1999) maintains that successful immigrant absorption in Israel depends upon three factors and the link between them:

1. The immigrants' motivation for and initial attitudes to immigration, their status in their country of origin, the significance they ascribe to Judaism and the State of Israel, and their educational, professional and economic skills.
2. The extent of transformation and adjustment required of the immigrant socially, professionally and culturally.
3. The nature of the absorption framework.

The last two factors depend on the country's absorption policy, whether it is based on the "melting pot" perception or the "pluralistic society" perception.

Aliya, like any type of immigration, is a process of de-socialisation. It implies a disruption of the individual's set of functions and a loss of his/her social identity. Adjustment, on the other hand, is a process of re-socialisation, creating a new set of functions and a new identity, while constructing a new link between one's self-image, the image ascribed to one's functions, and the acquisition of an accepted social status. In order to be socially absorbed, immigrants must be de-socialised from their old values and norms and re-socialised into new ones. When a dynamic equilibrium between these two is accomplished – in other words, when the forces of re-socialisation prevail – a successful adjustment is achieved (Bar-Yosef, 1980). According to Liebkind (1991), cultural continuity is crucial to a successful process of re-socialisation and adjustment, and it is important to support relations within the group while encouraging the development of ties with the new society.

In her study on Cambodian refugees in the United States, Hopkins (1992) argues that acquiring a new cultural identity and maintaining a continuity of the primary identity are not necessarily mutually exclusive processes and may co-exist. Furthermore, she argues that social and economic progress and integration make cultural continuity possible. Shamai (1999) stresses that cultural adjustment is a process shared by the absorbers and the absorbed. The process of cultural learning that entails active interactions between the parties generates adaptation on the part of the absorbers as well as the absorbed.

The above examination of the complex processes involved in immigration will provide insights into the situation in Israel in general – to be described briefly in the following section – and help probe the problems of the Ethiopian community in particular.

1.4 Immigration and Israeli Society

Like the USA and Australia, Israel is an immigrant society. In 1995, 39% of the Jewish population were born outside the country and an additional 40% were children of immigrants (Leshem, 1998). Moreover it is a society where unconditional immigration rights are granted to Jews. It is perceived as a national and social concern, originating in the Zionist perception of Israel as a place of refuge for every Jew.

Israeli society is determined to provide a home for Jews from all over the world wishing to live there, and integration is conceptualised in terms of absorption or full integration within society (Eden and Fishman, 2002). The Ministry of Immigration and Absorption is in charge of immigration. Israel provides new immigrants with more economic benefits than any other country in the world (i.e., housing, financial support, tax exemption, education, job training, a free six-month course to study the Hebrew language). These unique conditions make Jewish immigration to Israel an experience distinct from that of immigrant groups elsewhere (Eisikovits and Shamai, 2001).

Many immigrants come to Israel in order to seek a more fulfilling life, a more harmonious Jewish identity and a better future for their children. The children's successful absorption in the new society often attests to the astuteness of their decision to leave their country of birth and culture. Failure in the absorption process of new immigrant children is not only a hard and sometimes tragic experience, but also a disturbing reminder to Israeli society as a whole of its shortcomings and defects (Sever, 1997).

When the State of Israel was established in 1948, it had a population of 650,000 Jewish inhabitants. Over the last 50 years, more than 2.5 million immigrants have come to Israel from a diversity of countries and cultures. This huge population increase was one of the government's major economic, political and ideological goals and it provided considerable logistic and financial support. In the years 1990-1995, 103,000 primary school students entered the educational system. Of the new school classes opened in Israel during that period, 44% were the result of the influx of immigrants (Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995).

Immigration as an issue, at least on the public level, has a positive value and is socially acceptable and worthy of support. This is even reflected in everyday

language: common usage ignores the neutral Hebrew word for migration *hagira* in favour of the self-affirming, positively connotative word used to refer to immigration, *aliya* (meaning "ascent"). The act of immigration to Israel is hence considered as "moving up." This has a Jewish religious and spiritual significance, connoting that Israel-Zion has an exceptional spiritual value for the Jewish people and is therefore the ultimate geographic location for the home of all Jews. In contrast, the word used for emigration (from Israel) is *yerida*, which has the negative connotation of "moving down" or "descent." An additional interpretation relates to Jewish history and the "homelessness" of Jews over the centuries. Whereas migrants to other countries generally leave a place they consider home to seek a better place to live, Jews were viewed as "strangers" in their countries of origin and thus were never "home." Israel was regarded as the home they yearned for, to be reached through immigration (Benski, 1994; Markowitz, 1993).

For Jews, improvement is considered inherent to the process of immigrating to Israel – their "homeland." Immigrants coming from the Diaspora arrive from various countries and embark on the process of becoming Zionist Israelis with cohesive social values and norms, ultimately to become akin to the *sabras* (native-born Israelis). This view is also reflected in legislation, as in the Law of Return passed in 1950, whereby "Every Jew has the right to come to this country as an *oleh*" (a Jew immigrating to Israel). This law established an open-door policy for Jews and granted immigrating Jews the right to citizenship upon arrival and special benefits to help them settle down in their new country. Beyond the institutional importance of the Law of Return, it symbolically reiterates the assumption that Jews, wherever they live and whatever their outward appearance, are of common origin and therefore have the "natural" right to re-establish their residence in Israel.

Israel currently has a Jewish population of about 5.4 million (accounting for 38% of the world's Jews); the non-Jewish population is approximately 1.3 million (82% of which are Muslims, 9% Christians and 9% Druze.) Israel's population has grown more than eight-fold since 1948. Three million have immigrated since 1948, and more than one million since 1990; 31,000 have arrived in the past year (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, May 7, 2003). Of this recent wave of immigration, about 750,000 came from the former USSR, 90,000 from various European countries, and 60,000 from Ethiopia (Israeli Government Statistics, 1998). Israel's Jewish

population comes from 103 different countries and speaks 82 languages (Spector, 1992). The common denominator of all Jewish students is considered to be the shared religion and customs that began evolving in ancient Israel about 3,000 years ago.

I will now discuss the Ethiopian Jews' reasons for emigrating and aspects of their absorption in Israeli society pertinent to the educational issues that are the focus of this study.

1.5 The Life of Ethiopian[2] Jews in Ethiopia and their Motives for Emigration

To better understand the meaning of the transition and changes the Ethiopian community has had – and still has – to undergo in Israel, it is important to consider both the lifestyle of this community in their country of origin and the reasons for their emigration.

The Beta Israel (the name given to the Jewish community in Ethiopia) lived mainly in scattered, agrarian villages, most of them in northwestern Ethiopia. Before the 1974 revolution, nearly all of the villagers were tenants of landlords (Kessler, 1996). The men cultivated the land by traditional means and were responsible for the cattle, while the women took care of the home and the children, engaged in different crafts and bringing water to the family. In addition, many Jews worked as artisans: the men as blacksmiths, weavers and tanners, the women mainly as potters (Quirin, 1992). In the 1950s, a small number of Jews moved to the cities and became blue- or white-collar workers (Ben-Ezer, 1992), but the vast majority of the Beta Israel community continued to live a very simple rural life (Kessler, 1996).

Although most of the older population was illiterate, the cohesive community managed to maintain traditions that survived, uninterrupted, through centuries of isolated living. Although devoutly religious, they were not familiar with many of the Jewish religious laws practiced by Jews in other parts of the world.

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[2] "Ethiopian" refers to the ethnicity of Ethiopian immigrants and their family members who were born in Israel. It does not refer to their nationality since, based on the Law of Return, Ethiopian immigrants receive Israeli nationality the moment they arrive in Israel. Ethiopian Jews are also known as Falash or Beta Israel, but in Israel, the community itself prefers to be addressed as "Ethiopian Jews" (Kaplan, 1987; Abbink, 1984).

The first wave of immigration from Ethiopia arrived in Israel in 1984 (Operation Moshe), with the second following in 1991 (Operation Shlomo). Since then, they have continued to immigrate to Israel, but in smaller numbers.

The Beta Israel had several motives for immigrating to Israel, some of which may be seen as "pull" factors (i.e., religious aspirations, including the desire to live in the biblical land of Israel and the wish to reunite with their families) and others as "push" factors (i.e., tensions arising from the difficult economic and political situation in Ethiopia).

For centuries, the Beta Israel lived a distinct and religious life in Ethiopia, but this freedom was seriously threatened by the new Marxist military regime, which came into power in 1974. The Ethiopian military leadership strongly opposed any ethnic, political or religious activity that seemed to reflect a nationalist spirit for fear that it would threaten the stability of the new government. According to Friedman and Friedman (1987), these acts were anti-nationalist rather than anti-religious, and were directed against all non-Marxists. Nevertheless, the result was that Jewish schools were closed and the teaching of Hebrew and Judaism was strictly forbidden (Ben-Ezer, 1992). Military activities against dissident groups intensified following the revolution (Kessler, 1996).

Sanctions imposed against the buying and owning of land by Jews was yet another acute problem, making life difficult for the Beta Israel in Ethiopia under the new regime (Wagaw, 1991). The Beta Israel was viewed as a foreign race by the Amhara (the Christian population of Ethiopia), was subjected to accusations of sorcery, and sometimes even became victims of violence (Friedmann and Santamaria, 1990). In addition, there was the drought and subsequent hunger, which had always been a painful part of Ethiopia's history (Wagaw, 1991).

The combined religious, economic and political pressures were decisive factors that culminated in the exodus of the Ethiopian Jews from their isolated mountain areas to Israel in the 1980s. The State of Israel, on its part, has always had a special moral commitment to rescue Jewish families from impending danger and provide them with a new safe homeland. This commitment also applied to the Ethiopian Jews. The following section will focus on their characteristics, central to the issue under study.

1.6 Characteristics of Ethiopian Immigrants

Two scholars who studied the unique characteristics of Ethiopian immigrants, Bodowski et al. (1994) and Ben-Ezer (1992), point out several features typifying this group of immigrants: their family structure, the foreignness of their language, and their different skin colour.

The Ethiopian family structure is patriarchal and the family is a social and economic unit. Hierarchy is established according to very clear-cut criteria. The elders always play a central role in the family and in the community at large. The Western perception of individualism and achievement-orientation does not exist (Ben-Ezer, 1992). Parent-child relationships clearly reveal the Ethiopian cultural values concerning the family's centrality, the honour code and parental authority. Ethiopian culture is based, to a large extent, on the concept of honour and respect for it. The Ethiopian individual is obligated to honour anyone who is higher or older than him/her in the social order. The resulting behaviour norms are, for example, obedience – not saying 'no' to authority and refraining from asking questions; shyness – not exposing one's emotions and lowering one's eyes. Communication is symbolically indirect, ambiguous and complex. Hospitality is important, and receiving guests includes a lengthy coffee-drinking ritual (Ben-Ezer, 1992; Bodowski et al., 1994).

Rosen (1991) claims that Ethiopian immigrants are highly suspicious and distrustful of the Israeli establishment due to their past experience and the many unfulfilled promises, as well as the contradictory explanations given by various authorities. For example, the promise was made that all Ethiopian immigrants would be settled in permanent housing within one year of their arrival; by the year 1992 (two years after their arrival), the authorities admitted that most of these immigrants would not receive permanent housing in the foreseeable future, but would be moved to mobile home sites. In these artificial settlements, they waited for yet another move at an unspecified date (Westheimer and Kaplan, 1992). Hertzog (1998a, 1998b) explored the bureaucratic aspects of the absorption of immigrants in absorption centres and claims that these centres had in fact an adverse effect, creating a separation and segregation of immigrants, thus preventing their integration into Israeli society.

1.7 Socialisation and the Ethiopian Community in Israel

Given their lives in Ethiopia and the socialisation process of the Ethiopian children, it is not difficult to understand why Ethiopian immigrants had integration problems and how these manifested themselves. Reber (1995, p. 732), defines socialisation as "the process whereby an individual acquires the knowledge, values, facility with language, social skills and social sensitivity." As Doob (1988) states, it is a process by which a person becomes a member of a group or society, learning the necessary cultural content and modes of behaviour, and, as a consequence, internalising the culture of the society to which the person belongs. However, in our context, socialisation is the process by which an individual acquires the knowledge appropriate to a given society (Peterson, 1999). Through socialisation, an individual becomes integrated into and behaves adaptively within a social, cultural, governmental or organisational society. Socialisation is a lifelong experience and the term applies across all ages.

Primary socialisation refers to society's imprint on the infant and young child in terms of basic social skills and modes of thinking, language, perception, values, moral standards, attitudes, aspirations and roles (Waters, 1990). The primary process usually takes place within the family environment, but secondary socialisation involves schools and peer groups, a continuation and adaptation of the primary process. The second stage is thus heavily influenced by schools, which provide an environment where new and diverse information can be learned, and where "specialized skills and linguistic abilities" are taught (Waters, 1990).

Socialisation varies from culture to culture. In the Ethiopian culture, obedience and conformity are highly valued, whereas in Israel, emphasis is placed on individuality and independence. The socialisation patterns of Ethiopian students are relevant to the understanding of what happens when they transfer from their indigenous environment to a westernised society such as Israel (Golan et al., 1987). Levin (1965,) describes how, from an early age, the Ethiopian child learns adult roles, a process based on training in a series of activities. In this process, boys and girls are expected to acquire the skills needed to perform their economic and social roles as adult men and women. Until the age of six, no attention is paid to the differences between boys and girls, and only later does the process of differentiation of gender roles begin, with the boys, for example, learning to collect firewood and

dependent, and hungry, there is a danger that this image will eventually be internalized and will replace the persons' self image or alter it to a significant degree. This can result in self doubt and self depreciation which can bring about a reduction in the level of achievement motivation."

As a result of these influences, immigrant children are at risk of developing an orientation towards helplessness, dependency and passivity. Clark et al. (1994) claim that such passivity, in association with restricted access to opportunities to learn, substantially reduces the ability for youth to exercise the self-determination required to access, use and benefit from independence and interpersonal and vocational opportunities. Based on my experience, the pattern of conformity characteristic of Ethiopian socialisation and the education policies lie at the heart of educational problems experienced by Ethiopian children when confronted with demands for autonomous thinking and the exercise of choice.

Upon their arrival in Israel, Ethiopian immigrants had to undergo many rapid changes within a short period of time. They were forced to come to terms with living in a country mainly populated by white-skinned people (for some Ethiopians this was a totally new experience). They had to adapt to living in a different climate and in urban centres as opposed to village life, as well as to learning a new language. Perhaps the most difficult of all was the need to adjust to changes in family hierarchy, especially the changed role of women. In Israel, Ethiopian women were (and still are) encouraged to play a greater role in running the family and to have greater responsibility and autonomy in their dealings with society around them. This is in contrast to life in Ethiopia, where women traditionally deferred to men, who held all positions of authority and power (Westheimer and Kaplan, 1992). This situation was further complicated by the necessity for women to seek work outside the household and become independent sources of income for the family, rather than homemakers (Bodowski et al., 1994). In addition, the children surpassed the adults, as is often the case with children of immigrants, since they are better able to adjust and communicate in the new society (Freund, 2001). As a result, men who had occupied the superior position in the family hierarchy lost much of their status (Westheimer and Kaplan, 1992).

It is, therefore, not surprising that the immigration of Ethiopian Jews to Israel is described in most sociological and psychological literature as a very traumatic

protect the crops from birds and animals. At the age of 13, boys are expected to acquire more advanced farming skills such as planting, seeding and harvesting, while the girls are expected to learn how to separate seeds from cotton, fetch water, grind corn and perform household duties.

The socialisation process includes not only the learning of roles, but also the internalisation of norms and values. Obedience is central to the Ethiopian way of life and a young child is expected to obey not only the elders of the family, but the entire adult community as well. Levin (1965) made the following statement in reference to Ethiopian society: "Obedience and respect comprised the principle fibre of the social fabric." Korten (1972) agrees and identifies four basic characteristics making up the Ethiopian social fabric: first is the rigid structure of social etiquette, hospitality, and respect for privacy; second is the strong pressure to conform to social norms and the suppression of individuality; third is the strict reciprocity in social relations; and fourth is a predisposition towards hierarchical social structuring and an unquestioning acceptance of authority.

This pattern might explain the so-called "passivity" of Ethiopian students, observed by teachers. The children are trained early on to obey the community of adults, to disregard their own desires, and not to express independent opinions. However, according to the concepts of a westernised society, a child who learns to obey authority without questioning will become passive and depend upon others in matters of choice. Wlodkowski (1995) states that people who feel unsafe, unconnected and not respected are unlikely to be motivated to learn. Seligman (1975) agrees with this assumption, but coins it "learned helplessness," which he considers an acquired behavioural disposition characterised by passivity, low self-esteem and internalisation of devalued social status. Learned helplessness is associated with impaired autonomy, inability to choose and poor problem-solving skills (Margalit and Shulman, 1986). Houghton et al. (1987) and Hoy (1986) assert that helplessness is reinforced by environmental factors that encourage passivity by providing little opportunity for an individual to make his own choices. Factors that promote passivity include over-protection and academic or social deprivation (Powers et al., 1996). Ben-Ezer (1992) agrees and states:

> *"When the social environment reflects back to an individual or a group an image of themselves which is helpless,*

transition, from a poor rural society to a sophisticated, urban and technologically developed one. In addition, the Ethiopian immigrants underwent traumatic experiences on their way to Israel and in their encounter with Israeli society, which sparked crises in almost every domain of their lives (Wagaw, 1993; Westheimer and Kaplan, 1992). Significant components of their lives, such as traditional leadership, stratification of society, lifestyle and many behavioural norms, were obliterated.

According to Goldlust and Richmond (1974) and Dyal and Dyal (1981), the greater the gap between behaviour patterns in the immigrants' country of origin and those in the adopted country, the more passive the immigrants become during the absorption process. The Ethiopian immigrants came to Israel unaware of the enormous cultural differences they would find. Not only were they incapable of anticipating the significant changes implicit in the move from a Third World country to a westernised one, but they found that the one aspect they were supposed to have in common with the receiving country – the Jewish religion – was embedded in a different framework and its practices were distinct. In fact, certain segments of Israeli society called their very Jewishness into question. Clearly, the gap between their previous way of life and the new one was vast. As a result, their ability to play an active role in the absorption process was diminished and they became passive.

In the year 2000, the Ethiopian community in Israel numbered 74,000 (Ministry of Absorption, 2000). Immigration to Israel from Ethiopia continues to take place, and each year several thousand immigrants enter and settle in the country. The Ethiopian community is a distinct, even unique, group in Israeli society, as it differs from the majority in terms of physical appearance as well as in the practices and customs related to the Jewish religion. Their prior educational experiences are very different from those of Israeli students, which may have led also to difficulties in time and space orientation, as well as to cultural and cognitive differences in knowledge, learning skills, and basic learning norms and behaviours (Friedman, 1986). Their encounter with the Israeli educational system was bound to be problematic.

The next chapter will deal with the structure of the Israeli educational system and the unique way children from Ethiopia were absorbed within it, which has some bearing on the ensuing problems.

CHAPTER 2: ISRAEL'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THE ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY

This chapter will describe Israel's educational system and the problems regarding the absorption of Ethiopian immigrant children within it.

2.1 Structure of Israel's Education System

The school system is one of the principal arenas for the direct encounter between the absorbing Israeli population and new immigrants – whether students, parents or teachers. School is where newcomers experience most intensively the absorbing country's culture. The teacher is the primary agent facilitating this encounter through messages conveyed to both absorbing and absorbed students (Horowitz & Leshem, 1998).

The contemporary educational system (see appendix A and B) stems from the pre-state organisational structure of education, and its policies should be understood from this perspective, i.e., they were initiated before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 (Elboim Dror, 1985). Until 1953, education was influenced by four ideological trends that differed as to their educational aims: the modern religious trend aimed at educating observant Jews, based on a combination of Zionism and religion; the labour trend, anchored in the socialist movement, aimed at combining Zionism and socialism; the general trend that steered a middle course, combining political, social and national traditions; and the trend of a small, ultra-Orthodox sector, for whom the teaching of religion was the only aim (Kleinberger, 1969).

In 1953, the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) passed the State Education Law, intended to abolish what was seen as an unwholesome linkage between pedagogy and organised political trends. This law did not provide funding for the four previous trends and recognised only two types of schools eligible for state support: the general state schools, which were secular in nature (about 80%) and the state religious schools (20%). The ultra-Orthodox sector was removed from state-funded education and was recognised as an independent trend (Stahl, 1991).

Israel's educational system is highly centralised both in structure and bureaucracy and includes both formal and informal educational frameworks. It is

administered and financed by the Ministry of Education through its administrators, supervisors and head-teachers, and teachers are appointed and paid by the Ministry of Education. There is one salary scale for all primary and secondary school teachers in Israel based on the teacher's level of education and years of experience. The formal educational system consists of the following main levels: pre-school, primary, secondary (lower and higher secondary), post-secondary frameworks, and academic institutions. The informal educational system includes both community youth activity centres located in various social and educational spheres, and general and vocational adult education.

In 1968, a reform of the entire school system was initiated and implemented by the Ministry of Education, requiring that the system be restructured as follows: six years of primary education (Grades 1-6), three years of lower secondary school (Grades 7-9), and three years of upper secondary school (Grades 10-12). The two main goals of this reform were to achieve a higher level of scholastic achievement and to advance the social integration of various sectors of society.

The reform, primarily implemented in the official education system[3], also included changes in the Compulsory Education Law (Kashti et al., 1997), which had previously only applied to children up to Grade 8. With the enactment of the reform, the Law was extended to Grade 10 (inclusive), bringing the total period of compulsory education up to 11 years of schooling (including one year of compulsory pre-school).

In the 2000/1 academic year, the total number of students in the entire educational system supervised by the Ministry of Education was approximately 1,600,000 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2000). (See Appendix A for the administrative structure and Appendix B for the structure of Israel's Educational System).

2.2 Absorption of Ethiopian Children into the Educational System

This section will discuss how the Israeli educational system attempted to absorb Ethiopian immigrants, and will argue that the implemented absorption policies actually contributed to the enhancement of passive dependent behaviour

[3] Official educational institutions belonging to and funded by the State and/or local authorities listed as official schools.

among Ethiopian children instead of advancing them. Moreover, they had a negative effect in the long run on their learning achievements and subsequent integration into society.

Immigrants to a new country are confused by the new and different behaviours and expectations they encounter. They face many frustrations, especially in the case of countries as different as Ethiopia and Israel. Ethiopians are described as passive, submissive and quiet in contrast to Israelis, who are considered to be much more active, vocal and assertive (Rosen, 1985). The typical respect of Ethiopian children for elders and authority figures means that one never says "no" to adults nor are their motives questioned (Rosen, 1985).

Policies regarding the educational integration of Ethiopians were developed only after thousands of Ethiopian immigrants had already arrived in Israel (Master Plan, Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, 1985). Israeli government officials did not anticipate the difficulties of absorbing the Ethiopian Diaspora, nor did they expect such a large number of immigrants, since most of the Ethiopian Jews were in hiding. Since Ethiopian immigrants were seen to be a vulnerable population requiring special care by the state (Donyo, 1983), it was stipulated that every Ethiopian immigrant should be referred to an absorption centre, which served as a cultural transition phase and facilitated integration into the new country by enabling the immigrants to reunite with their families (some arrived separately) and give each other with much needed comfort and support (Horowitz &Leshem, 1998).

The fact that the Ethiopian immigrants were perceived as vulnerable served to justify a policy of intensive state intervention in all aspects of their absorption. The problem with this approach, according to Halper (1987), was that the absorption process became a system of "care" rather than a process of developing dynamic social adaptation. In the absorption centres, the immigrants were not part of the decision- making process regarding their own absorption; they were not consulted because they were considered incapable of knowing what was good for them (Ashkenazi, 1987). One could argue that this system of "care" even increased their dependency and passivity, hindering their ability to adapt to Israeli life and successfully function within it. From my observation of Ethiopian students, this certainly seems to be the case.

In the early 1980s, Zevulun Hammer, then head of the National Religious Party (MAFDAL) and Minister of Education in the coalition government, met with the Chief Rabbis (with whom he was politically aligned) to discuss the educational "needs" of Ethiopians in the light of an earlier ruling by the Chief Rabbi, stating that Ethiopians were to be classified as Jews only for immigration purposes and educational benefits and rights. This classification was granted providing that they were educated in religious state schools. According to this policy, Ethiopian children would attend state religious schools during their first year in Israel, and would not be allowed to exercise their legal right to choose between secular or religious systems (Schwartzwald, 1984; Ministry of Education, 1996). Upon arrival, Ethiopian immigrants probably had no idea of the differences in the school system, and if given the choice, might well have chosen to send their children to a religiously oriented school or to the much larger, more diverse, and academically superior schools within the secular school system (Gdor, 1996). By ruling that all students aged 13-14 years must attend religious boarding schools, again the choices afforded to all Israelis and other new immigrants was denied to the Ethiopians.

In Israel, families are very much involved in the schools attended by their children. According to the law, parents have the right to participate in the planning of 25% of the curriculum, and are therefore active in education on both local and national levels. Teachers report that Ethiopian parents are only seldom involved in the school although they are interested in their children's success (Lifshitz et al., 1998). Bar-Yosef (2001) attributes this to the fact that they see the school as an official authority bearing full responsibility for their children. Teachers, on the other hand, often see themselves as representatives of a superior culture and relate to Ethiopian parents as they would to adult children. Given the Ethiopian cultural background that demands unquestioning respect for authority, parents did not object to the arrangement, and thus the young were directed to neighbourhood primary religious schools, and those in secondary school to religious boarding schools, which functioned within the Youth Aliya Villages[4]. This also reflected the assumption that state and boarding schools would and could provide a better environment for the

[4] Youth Aliya was originally founded in 1933 to rescue Jewish youth from Nazi Germany. Today, Youth Aliya Villages continue to play a vital role in absorbing young newcomers, as well as offering thousands of disadvantaged Israeli youths a second chance.

youngsters than that provided by their immigrant parents and the family. This is yet another example of well-meaning but poorly conceived intentions.

In addition to all of the above, decisions regarding the education of Ethiopian children were politically driven. The policies that determined where Ethiopian immigrant children would be placed in the school system, the type of education they would receive (religious or secular), the nature of the schools they would attend (e.g., religious boarding schools), and therefore their subsequent absorption and socialisation, were greatly affected by political ideologies (Gdor, 1996).

An important component in the absorption process was placing Ethiopian immigrant children in formal school settings. Bar-Yosef (2001) mentions that despite representing only 7% of the new immigrant population, Ethiopian immigrant children have more problems than children from other immigrant groups and demand more individualised attention and resources. This is probably because Ethiopian children face a triple jeopardy: not only are they immigrants and, as such, face a foreign culture, but they are also dark-skinned, setting them apart from both the native Israelis and the other immigrants who arrived at the same time as they did (mainly those from the former USSR). Finally, most of them come from homes of low socio-economic status with all the inherent disadvantages.

This policy was later reviewed. Some were in favour of continuing with the boarding school policy since it provided a place of refuge, total absorption and education for teenage Ethiopians. Its intent, they claimed, was to give these children an intensive learning experience that stressed Jewish studies and religious practice, enabling them to complete their secondary school studies and prevent them from entering the labour market prematurely and unprepared. Others were more critical and claimed that the academic level was low and that placing Ethiopian immigrants in this setting led to a dead end, since most of the programmes were non-academic and would affect their future job opportunities. The last point of criticism raised was that placing them in religious state institutions actually segregated them (Halevi, 1996). As a result of this criticism, this policy began to change after 1992 (yet again the basic freedom to choose was denied).

No similar policy was deemed necessary for the much larger group of immigrant children from the former USSR, whose families had lived in a communist system for several generations. As a group, these students arrived with a rich

educational experience and had well-educated parents. Most families could freely choose where to live and which school systems to attend. The majority settled in central Israel, which has better schools and job opportunities, and over 90% chose to study in state secular schools although they had the option of sending their older children to secular or religious boarding schools (few did) or having them study in local schools.

The absorption of Ethiopian children into Israel's educational system involved a white, modern, educated western country absorbing coloured Africans with little formal education and utilized human resources. The Israeli case differs from the experience of African immigrants in other Western countries due to the shared Jewishness of both the host and the immigrant group. In other ways, the Israeli case is not so different. Ethiopian children were placed in weaker schools having an inferior educational system. Many studied in segregated classes and with poorly trained teachers (Gdor, 1996; Gibson and Obgu, 1991). Consequently they were denied educational opportunities offered to veteran Israeli and non-Ethiopian immigrant children.

One can see how and why it was easy to impose the aforementioned educational policy on this population – something that was not done, nor even attempted, with less malleable immigrant groups. According to a study by Weil (1995), until the end of their formal training, Ethiopian youngsters were rarely allowed to make individual choices regarding educational options. As a group, 96.5% were placed in state religious schools (as opposed to approximately one fifth of the overall population placed there during the same period, 1987-1989). Only 3.5% of Ethiopian students studying during this period completed their education in secular schools. The majority was sent to boarding schools (most of which were mediocre), to less prestigious schools (of these, 69.5% studied in non-academic tracks as opposed to less than 50% of the general population in these tracks during the same period). In addition, many were placed in classes with younger children because of their poor scholastic performance.

The educational policies described above and their implications were not, however, the only factors that contributed to the passivity and dependency shown by Ethiopian immigrants. A similar trend appeared regarding the issue of housing. Undoubtedly formulated with the best of intentions, the housing policy implemented

was based on the notion that rapid and successful absorption required that Ethiopian immigrants be scattered throughout the country and settled within veteran communities. For the Ethiopians, this meant moving to specific settlements where they would represent no more than 4% of the settlement's overall population (Fenster, 1998). This demographic planning is another example of denying Ethiopians the basic right of choice and opportunity; in this case as well, they voiced little objection, or perhaps were not given the chance to do so.

A survey conducted by Benita & Noam in 1995 reveals that Ethiopian immigrants demonstrate a continuing desire to live in close proximity to their relatives: 60% felt it was important that other Ethiopians lived in the same neighbourhood and 57% indicated it was important that other Ethiopians lived in the same apartment block. As Benita's survey demonstrates, the implemented housing policy was not consistent with their desire since nobody considered their wishes. This not only shows that choice was denied, but also that the assimilation of Ethiopians into a new and unfamiliar society was something that was simply taken for granted. The results have been disappointing and suggest that in housing, as in education, attention needs to be paid to the issue of choice, a major component of autonomy.

As we have seen in this chapter, the cultural traditions of Ethiopian students, their encounters with new and different types of pedagogical and educational values, and the lack of opportunity (for both parents and students) to choose a school that might better suit the individual students, all led to a situation in which Ethiopian children did not achieve the success in schooling that they themselves and society had anticipated. This is especially true when considering the size of the investment made for this purpose. In Israel, as in other western societies, high achievement in education is the key to economic and social success. In the case of Ethiopian immigrants, it will determine their successful integration into Israel's mainstream, modern, technological and predominantly urban society.

However, the goal of integration cannot be met without acquiring the necessary skills for successful adaptation to western styles of learning. The term "passive," often used by teachers to describe Ethiopian students (Ashkenazi, 1987), clearly indicates that these children are not equipped with such skills. Central to adaptation to Israeli (and western) culture is the concept of self-determination and

exercising control over one's own destiny. The skill of self-determination includes learning to set goals and how to achieve them, learning to opt for one of multiple choices, recognising the outcomes of one's choices, and knowing that an erroneous decision can be remedied by another option. The current educational practices clearly do not offer Ethiopian students the opportunity to enhance their self-determination skills.

The next chapter will focus on the theoretical aspects of self-determination, providing a basis for the consideration of an intervention programme.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF SELF-DETERMINATION RELATED TO THE NEEDS OF ETHIOPIAN CHILDREN

In order to understand the meaning of the term *self-determination* and its relationship to education, it is important to follow its history. This chapter will review the professional literature on self-determination to show that although self-determination existed as a concept in many fields, it was not used in the field of education until recently. Furthermore it was not regarded as a major area in educating immigrant children in general, and Ethiopian children in Israel in particular. In this respect, the concepts of cultural difference and cultural deprivation, cultural capital and cultural reproduction must be defined, as well as certain pertinent aspects of adolescence.

3.1 Definitions of Self-Determination

Prior to the 1990s, the term self-determination was used almost exclusively in the disciplines of philosophy, political science and psychology. It was included as a central purpose of the United Nations in its charter in 1945: "The purposes of the United Nations are... to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self- determination of people" (Charter of the UN, 1945). As a political term, it was first used on December 10, 1948 when the UN Assembly adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the original text, the expression "everyone has the right to...," which appears in many articles, clearly shows that most national bodies believe that individuals in society have the right to determine their fate.

In political science, the term refers to the right of people and nations to self-governance, and it is often used in conjunction with the terms freedom and independence. Thus we see that self-determination is tied in with all aspects of political, economic, social and cultural life, and is ultimately about how to choose to live and allow others to live.

In philosophy, Jean Jacques Rousseau, the French writer and philosopher, made a great contribution to the notion of the natural right to individual freedom and self-determination. His theory of education ultimately led to more indulgent and psychologically oriented methods of childcare in the 20th century, which in turn led

to the development of freer thinking people. The German educator, Friedrich Froebel, the Swiss reformer, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and other pioneers of modern education were influenced by Rousseau's theory of human free will (Encarta, 1997) and by his book *The New Eloise*, which introduced a new style of personal experience – the "exploration of the conflicts between moral and sensual values (Bretonneau, 1961, p.33). Rousseau's well-known influence on the development of modern romanticism led to a greater understanding of the distinction between personal experience and its analysis. Thus, Rousseau's ideas and writings established the foundations for the 21st century view of self-determination for all.

In psychology, the term self-determination was first used in theories of personality and motivation (Deci & Ryan 1985)). One of the focal points of research in psychology has been the inquiry into the determinants of human behaviour, defined by Wolman (1973) in his *Dictionary of Behavioural Science*: "an event or antecedent condition that in someway causes an event." Determinism is the doctrine stating that all phenomena, including behaviour, are effects of preceding causes (Wolman, 1973). Some determinants of human behaviour that he described are physiological states, such as hunger and environmental influences, and psychological, cognitive and motivational variables.

The field of personality psychology is mainly concerned with describing and explaining individual differences in behaviour and determining whether a person's behaviour is caused by factors that are internal or external to the person, as well as the degree to which these factors influence behaviour. The term self-determination has also appeared in psychological literature pertaining to motivation, particularly the work of Deci and Ryan (1985), where self-determination refers to an internal need contributing to an individual's performance of intrinsically motivated behaviours. According to their conception, human beings are inherently active and internally motivated to engage in activities for which there is no obvious external reward. Children's inclinations to learn, undertake challenges and solve problems are examples of internally motivated behaviour. Intrinsic motivation is the "energy source that is central to the active nature of the organism" (Deci and Ryan, 1985, p. 11).

Drawing upon White's (1959) theory of motivation, White, Deci and Ryan (1985) propose a theory of intrinsic motivation that hypothesises a central role for

self-determination. In their later work, Deci and Ryan (1994) assert that man has an inner wish to explore, understand and learn from his environment and that such a personal, active orientation is essential for both acquiring cognitive skills and experiencing positive self-development. The two researchers argue that such internal motivation should be present if optimal learning is to take place. They also claim that an integrated, regulated style, together with internal motivation, represents the basis for self-determined effort and a positive self-concept. Moreover, they point out that one's social environment is able to support an individual's endeavours to satisfy the mental needs relevant to internal and external motivation, i.e., the need for self-determination and the social sense of belonging. Deci and Ryan's (1985, p. 38) definition of self-determination is "[the] capacity to choose and to have those choices, rather than let reinforcements, contingences, drives or any other forces or pressures become the determinants of one's actions."

Self-determination is more than just a capacity, it is also a need: "We have posited a basic propensity to be self-determining that leads organisms to engage in interesting behaviours" (Deci et al.1992, p. 44). They also distinguish between the motivational dynamics underlying activities that people carry out freely and those that they feel coerced or pressured to perform. To be self-determining means to be engaged in an activity with a full sense of wanting, choosing and personally endorsing that activity.

Houghton, et al.(1987) claim that the emerging interest in facilitating choice-making stems from the acknowledgment that choosing is a valued and complex part of life, and that the ability to exercise choice increases autonomy and enhances the perception of a person's worth. Heyne, et al. (1993) agree, stating that the more choices individuals have, the more eager they are to learn the skills necessary to participate in choice-making processes, the more readily they transfer these skills to other settings, and the more likely they are to continue to participate actively. Dattilo and St. Peter (1991) observe that when people perceive that they are free to choose and participate in meaningful and satisfying experiences, they will be intrinsically motivated to participate. Ward (1988) defined self-determination as a concept referring both to the attitudes that lead people to define goals for themselves, and to their ability to take initiative to achieve these goals. He identified a set of characteristics of self-determination: a) self-actualisation; b) assertiveness;

c) creativity; d) pride; and e) self-advocacy. These characteristics include both the attitudes that lead people to define goals for themselves and the ability to initiate actions to achieve these goals.

Field and Hoffman (1994, p. 136) later defined self-determination as "one's ability to define and achieve goals based on a foundation of knowing and valuing oneself." Their model addresses cognitive, affective and behavioural components that promote self-determination, and proposes the following five directives: a) know yourself; b) value yourself; c) plan; d) act; and e) experience outcomes and learn. In their definition, the first two components are internal processes, c) and d) relate to skills, and only the last element relates to learning and profiting from experience.

Closely linked to the ability to choose options and set goals is the concept of freedom. Sylvester (1985) defines genuine freedom not only as the absence of constraints, but also as the actual making of choices.

In the field of education, Wolfensberger's (1972) normalisation principle, supported by the philosophical concepts of freedom and choice, has served as a guide for those who have developed and provided educational services for students with learning difficulties. In education, normalisation is clearly identified with practices of integration and mainstreaming, which enable individuals to achieve maximal independence and to live productive and meaningful lives.

Wehmeyer (1996, p. 22) defined self-determination as "the primary causal agent in one's life for making choices and decisions regarding the quality of life, which is free from undue external influences or interference." Teachers seeking to promote self-determination in their students must enable them to become self-regulated problem-solvers. Sarason (1990, p. 163) suggests that an essential purpose of the educational process is to "produce responsible, self-sufficient citizens who possess the self-esteem, initiative, skills, and wisdom to continue individual growth and pursue knowledge." I find this definition helpful for educators since it has the potential to guide practice in education.

Self-determination is a term used in a variety of fields. As such it borrows and applies methods and tools from disciplines such as psychology, sociology, history and anthropology. While most of the prominent advances regarding this issue have been made over the past two decades in the field of special education and rehabilitation, Powers et al. (1996) conceptualise self-determination as a crucial

component of the development of a competent person. Without meaningful opportunities to make choices, people are bereft of an important, appropriate means for creating a rich personal lifestyle. In essence, self-determination is a call for shifting power from a system to the individual, allowing people to choose how they live. In the case of Ethiopian immigrants, it is not only a matter of letting them choose how to live, but a matter of teaching them skills that will facilitate making choices.

3.2 Cultural Difference and Cultural Deprivation

To understand the learning difficulties of Ethiopians and the need for self-determination skills from a socio-cultural perspective, we must distinguish between 'cultural difference' and 'cultural deprivation'. This distinction is largely based on Feuerstein's theory[5] (1991) of Mediated Learning and Cognitive Modifiability (MLE). Central to this theory is the assumption that thinking processes occur within meaningful contexts, as individuals conduct purposeful, goal-directed activities.

Cultural deprivation relates to the situation in which deficiencies are associated with inadequacies in the family learning environment of the children, and children from certain minorities enter schools deficient in academic skills (Marjoribanks, 1979) Therefore, educational programmes should attempt to compensate for the alleged deficiencies of minority group families. Other researchers have asserted that socioeconomic disadvantages constrain educational opportunities for poor children and children of color (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). Emphasizing social inequalities, these researchers argue that the instruction that poor children receive is inferior to the instruction of middle-class and upper-class students. For example, Ryan (1976) states that instead of "blaming the victim" by pointing to deficiencies in the ability, character, or family functioning of students, researchers need to look at structural problems in schools and society.

In the 1960s, anthropologists advanced the cultural deprivation theory (also referred to as cultural deficit or social disadvantage) to explain the lack of success in

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[5] Feuerstein proposed that human intelligence, as a dynamic, flexible and modifiable construct, lies at the base of the species' adaptability in its social-historical nature. Any human being, independent of experience, age, functioning etiology and cultural context, is open to cognitive modifiability, even if he/she has had an unpropitious social educational background.

learning of certain groups. Those who promoted this theory emphasised the salience of environmental factors to explain this deficit, as opposed to others who suggested that the deficit was due to genetic factors. According to cultural deprivation theories, some minorities exhibit lower achievements in school because they share a culture of poverty, in which families do not instil in their children the knowledge, language, skills or habits of mind necessary for academic success (Heller, 1966).

According to Feuerstein, there is no such thing as a depriving culture. Any culture, as long as it brings to people's consciousness a concern for their origins and realises itself through the process of transmission from generation to generation, enriches individuals and creates a predisposition towards learning. However, the cultural deprivation syndrome occurs when an individual, for a number of reasons, is deprived of his/her own culture. It is not the particular culture per se that deprives the individuals, but rather the external and internal circumstances that prevent an individual from establishing proper identification with another culture.

In an attempt to understand the outstanding academic achievements of Indo-Chinese refugee children in the USA, Caplan et al. (1992) examined the role of the family. They found that although the families did not speak the language, had economic difficulties, and some of the children did not attend school for months or even for years, as soon as they entered school they did exceptionally well and reached levels of excellence. According to the researchers, this was the result of the home environment. Parents placed a high value on education; they were committed and involved in their children's school work by encouraging them and providing the best conditions possible for doing school assignments; they encouraged tutoring by elder siblings, and simultaneously emphasised and transmitted their own culture to their children. All this led to the extraordinary achievements of these immigrants. The researchers refer to other studies of similar phenomena of academic excellence among immigrants, such as the Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe to the USA, Japanese students who arrived after World War II, and a more recent study of low-income African-American students in Chicago. Although Ethiopian culture values education, once the children reached Israel they were sent to boarding schools and their parents were not given the opportunity to become involved in their schooling and extend the necessary moral support. Moreover, the children were denied the continuous transmission of their own culture.

The great danger associated with the cultural deficit approach is evident in the case of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel, who, owing to the confusion between their manifest levels of functioning and their true potential, have generally, and often erroneously, been placed in classes that offer them a very low level of education and training. Kaufman (1999) notes that due to stereotyping, these Ethiopian immigrant children were branded as problematic, having behavioural as well as academic problems, and many were placed in special education frameworks. This was also reported in the United Kingdom by Steedman (1979), who concluded that immigrant children – not only in the United Kingdom but in other Western European countries as well – are generally considered as doing less well in their studies, being over-represented in special classrooms, leaving school earlier, and being under-represented in selective institutions of higher education.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, cultural difference theories began to replace those of cultural deprivation. The cultural difference theory posited the notion that immigrants arriving in a new country have a rich, complex culture and a native language that differ from, but in no way are inferior to, those of the dominant culture (Trueba and Baetolome, 1997). According to Feuerstein, cultural difference is a term that has been generally applied to individuals from societies considered to be "traditional" or "primitive," "distant" from Western societies in terms of technology and education. Feuerstein defines these culturally different people as having had substantial exposure to their original culture and as experiencing methods of transmission that differ greatly from those of their own cultures, and as a result, having had to adapt. However, since these individuals have actually experienced both cultural learning and cultural transmission, which gave them a sense of cultural identity, one can argue that they have the capacity to learn and that cultural differences should not be considered an obstacle to adaptation.

From this position one can say that once teachers accept minority cultures as being valid on their own terms, then many of the problems confronting teachers and children are likely to disappear. As Bernstein (1970, p. 347) suggests:

> *"We should start knowing that the social experience the child already possesses is valid and significant, and that this social experience should reflect back to him as being valid and significant."*

3.3 Cultural Capital and Cultural Reproduction

In addition to the above theories which help to explain the difficulties Ethiopian immigrant students face during the process of absorption into Israeli society, I will refer to 'cultural capital' and 'cultural reproduction' theories such as those of Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) in order to broaden the theoretical background and better explain the intervention program which considers the Ethiopians students cultural capital, and suggests that the successful implementation of the intervention may help prevent cultural reproduction. Although Bourdieu originally hypothesized the notion of cultural capital while studying unequal educational achievements among children from different social classes, in this study I wish to go beyond his class orientation and use the concept of cultural capital, 'habitus', and cultural/social reproduction to help understand the feeling of helplessness and passive behaviour of these students as phenomena stemming from their immigration, and consider the way the present situation may affect the lives of Ethiopian immigrant students if nothing will be done. Since the Jews from Ethiopia were sought out and welcomed as immigrants, this should not be considered an issue related to social class. Such an approach may even make it possible to examine the educational problems of other immigrant groups welcomed by countries such as Canada, Australia and others.

According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital takes three forms. The first is the way in which cultural capital manifests itself in the behaviour of people familiar with the dominant culture. In any society cultural capital is perceived as the background knowledge, dispositions and skills that are passed on from parent to child and basically refers to past experiences. The second form is related to the present and is manifested in the level of education (academic capital). The process of translating cultural capital into academic capital occurs in schools, when teachers place more value on certain types of cultural capital than on others. Bourdieu terms the third form 'habitus', meaning the inner resources of the individual, and it comprises beliefs, attitudes, experiences, values and even aspirations. According to Bourdieu, 'habitus' is the sum of those attributes that shape the child's perception of the self. Thus a child who immigrates from a less developed country (as is the case with the Ethiopian immigrants), and, in addition, is from a lower socio-economic background, is expected to do less well in school than his/her native counterpart, who

is also better off economically. Upon arrival in Israel, the Ethiopian immigrants encountered frustration, disappointment and other hardships (as described in the background chapter), and these now pose the greatest obstacles to their education and to the process of their absorption. Bourdieu believes that cultural capital and 'habitus' are the keys to social/cultural reproduction and sees schools as active rather than passive transmitters of cultural standards and thus reproducers of inequalities. Considering that these immigrants have already been denied the basic right to choose the type of education their children will receive, it seems appropriate to use Bourdieu's theory to examine whether the schools Ethiopian students are obliged to attend do actually contribute towards social cultural reproduction and how this is likely to affect their future and successful integration as citizens.

From this perspective, a somewhat simplistic yet prevalent approach in Israel is to provide new immigrants with intensive Hebrew language courses in the hope that once they acquire some Hebrew language literacy, they will catch up with content subjects as well. Kozulin (1999) notes at least two problematic points in this approach when teaching Ethiopian students. The first is that for the majority of Ethiopian students, the process of learning Hebrew is also the process of acquiring literacy. Kozulin maintains that when acquiring basic literacy is carried out in the medium of a second language, it cannot provide the kind of support naturally provided by the native tongue. The second problem is that teachers rely on some kind of spontaneous catching up with the curriculum, but the problem here is not the amount of learning material these students have to catch up with, but the absence of basic skills and strategies for comprehending any formal educational material.

In light of the above, I believe that in order to prevent Ethiopian new immigrant students from feeling that being different directly affects their ability to integrate into their new society, they must be provided with the tools/skills that will enable them to act as equal, contributing and productive members of society. Many efforts have been made through cognitive intervention programmes to endow Ethiopian students with the skills necessary to function academically (Kozulin, 1999). However, according to Feuerstein, this is not enough since the main difficulty faced by these individuals is that the original tools with which they had previously conducted their everyday life and symbolic activities have lost their functionality in the new society. They have suddenly found themselves thrown into a social context

in which they had to adjust to new norms, a new language, new lifestyles and values, different from (and often diametrically opposed to) those of their previous rural society and culture, where the main goals of life were survival, preservation of the status quo, and the oral transmission of the culture from one generation to the next.

In Israel, within a very short time, they have had to adjust to a modern, open and constantly changing society, so very different from theirs in terms of content, experience, structure and form. Taking into account all of the above, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the relatively low level of functioning of most Ethiopian students can be explained by socio-cultural and contextual factors, and is not necessarily the result of an inherently limited learning potential. Based on these facts and my extensive experience as an educator, I wish to introduce an intervention programme intended to teach self-determination skills to Ethiopian children.

3.4 Self-Determination and its Relevance to Ethiopian Immigrants

Legislation, passed recently in the USA, stressed the importance of self-determination skills for students having a variety of needs; the law affirms the right to make one's own decisions about one's life and future as an inalienable right. (Wehmeyer ., 2000). Examples of this are The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and The Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA) passed in 1990. The latter requires that: 1) a coordinated set of activities be planned for the student; and 2) students' performance and interests be taken into account when planning the strategy stage for the study programme.

Evidence of this trend in legislation can be seen in the recent 1992 Rehabilitation Act Amendment (in the USA), which clearly emphasises the importance of developing self-determination skills in children with learning difficulties. The Law of Special Education (1988) in Israel and the Children's' Act of 1989 in England are additional examples.

These laws have all stressed the right of individuals with a variety of needs to choose where and with whom they want to live, what jobs they want, and by what means they want to achieve their personal goals and dreams. Since most of the professional literature on self-determination includes the rationale that it is a basic civil right and a legislative injunction (Ward, 1996; Wehmeyer and Ward, 1995), it is feasible to relate it to the case of Ethiopian children, who were deprived of these

rights (see Chapter 2). Blatt (1987) stated that freedom of choice is a freedom that most people cherish. It is one of the most important ideals in any democratic society. Why then should a different set of ideas and values be applicable to Ethiopian immigrants? Such legislation is important for educators since it requires them to emphasise skills that prepare students for the expectations of the environment they will encounter after leaving school (Field and Hoffman, 1994).

There has been growing awareness in the fields of disability services, rehabilitation, psychology and education of the need to promote self-determination skills among students who demonstrate lack of success in learning, especially during the transition period from school to work and autonomy (Wehmeyer et al., 1998). This awareness is based, at least partially, on the need felt by individuals to experience an enhanced quality of life. This approach, appropriate for underachieving individuals, suggests that an essential purpose of the educational process is to "produce responsible, self-sufficient citizens who possess the self-esteem, initiative, skills and wisdom to continue individual growth and pursue knowledge" (Sarson, 1990, p. 163). This vision of education may be said to articulate the intentions of initiatives to promote self-determination in children and youth, and it highlights the important role of educators in developing self-determination skills in their students.

Wehmeyer (1998) and Wehmeyer et al. (1998) propose that self-determined people are "causal agents" and as such cause things to happen in their lives (Deci and Ryan, 1985). An agent is a person or a thing through which power is exerted to achieve an end (Wehmeyer., 2000). Teachers can play an important role in promoting the abilities and attitudes that students need in order to take charge of their lives by both providing instruction in self-determination skills and creating a school environment where these skills can be practiced.

Individuals having a variety of learning difficulties often lack the skills that could enable them to take more control and make choices in their lives. They may have experienced over-protection and in some cases even segregation. This is true of the Ethiopian immigrants, excluded from most of the decision-making processes that influence their lives; their opportunities for learning how to make choices have been limited as were the options from which they could choose. However, research and practice have shown that given adequate support, experience and learning

opportunities, these individuals can become more self-determined, take greater control and responsibility over their lives, and thus improve their quality of life. This same principle can be applied to minorities who have also been denied the right to determine their way in life, but given the know-how and opportunity can and will assume control and responsibility over their lives and surely aspire to higher goals.

Although most of the education literature on self-determination focuses on individuals (children) with special needs, the principles can equally apply to immigrant children in general, and Ethiopian immigrants in particular. As Gillborn (1997) claims, the position of ethnic minorities is characterised by low achievement levels, little pursuit of higher education, widespread truancy and disciplinary problems. When Ethiopian children enter school, they must cope with the difficulties arising from the transition from one culture to another, from one school system to another, and from rural to urban life. Therefore, they are at risk of developing traits that may be perceived as belonging to individuals with special needs. Examples might be the inability to pay attention, selective mutism and withdrawal, loneliness, fear, difficulty of understanding expected social behaviour, and multiple family conflicts (Parker and Asher, 1987). The latter is especially true of immigrant children who were accustomed to the absolute authority of their parents and elders (Congress, 1986). Although some immigrant children adapt successfully to the new school environment (e.g., American immigrants to Israel), others have difficulties that result in being placed in programmes that assume relatively low levels of achievement and focus on remedial education (Steedman, 1979).

For the purpose of this research, I will adopt Wehmeyer's definition of self-determination, which refers to the attitudes and abilities needed to act as the primary causal agent in one's own life, making choices and decisions unencumbered by external influences or interferences; it is a critical element contributing to an individual's quality of life (Wehmeyer, 1992). In this definitional framework, an act or event is self-determined if:

> *"a) the individual acts autonomously i.e. if the person acts according to his or her preferences and abilities, unperturbed by undue external influences or interference;*

b) the person makes decisions about which skill to use in a situation, and evaluates a plan of action with revisions if necessary;

c) the person initiates and responds to events in a 'psychologically empowered manner,' in other words, acts on the basis of his/her belief that they have the capacity to perform behaviours needed to influence outcomes in their environment, and if such behaviours are exercised, anticipated outcomes will result; and

d) the person acts in a self-realising manner i.e. uses a comprehensive and reasonably accurate knowledge of himself or herself and their strengths and limitations, so as to capitalise on this knowledge in a beneficial way" (Wehmeyer, 1996, p.24).

Implied in this definition is the view that self-determination is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves, take the initiative to reach these goals, experience and evaluate the consequences of their choices. It should be clear that teachers, who are at the heart of teaching-learning situations, have a crucial responsibility to develop learning environments responsive to the emotional, social, cultural and academic needs of immigrant children. Indeed, teachers may be seen as bridge-builders between home and school, ensuring that children are provided with opportunities to experience goal-setting and ways to the attainment of their goals.

By not being involved in determining their futures, and often not even being consulted, it is no wonder that these traditionally obedient and conforming children appeared unmotivated, confused and helpless – leading to their passive behaviour. As Gdor states (1996), placing students from different educational backgrounds and low socio-economic strata into an inadequate and inappropriate educational framework will generally lead to a restricted learning experience, and sadly for Ethiopian children, this was the rule rather than the exception. If appropriate education is the key to successful integration into Israeli society, then the inculcation of self-determination skills is the key to helping Ethiopian students become more independent and self-reliant, to develop an internal locus of control. Endowed with these skills, they will be better equipped to understand the world around them, retain a sense of confidence and pride in their personal and cultural identity, and be better prepared to be active participants in the community.

3.5 Self-Determination and Adolescents

In behavioural and development theories, adolescence is generally seen as a critical period of development. During this time, adolescents are in the process of separating from their parents, increasing their self-awareness, developing social relationships with peers, and striving for personal autonomy, which is associated with an increasing desire for independence and an assertion of personal identity (Berk, 2000). Each of these processes is essential if adolescents are to assume their roles and responsibilities in society (Larson and Kleiber, 1993). For immigrant adolescents, the challenges typifying this period are intensified since, in addition to the physical and psychological changes during the transition from childhood to adulthood, they must also go through a dramatic cultural transition, as is the case of the Ethiopians. Moreover, one must remember that they were not active participants in the decision of their parents to immigrate (Wiess and Wissman, 1994).

Intervention programs have been introduced to address problems faced by underachieving adolescents. Effective interventions focus primarily on social skills, learning strategies and self-management strategies (Hazel et al., 1981; Schumaker and Sheldon, 1985; Watson and Throp, 1993). Until recently, interventions were used primarily to remedy existing deficits, such as academic difficulties and behavioural problems. However, since 1990, researchers have also become concerned with interventions empowering adolescents and enabling them to become more independent and exercise more control over their lives. Here the emphasis is placed upon self-determination skills. Most professionals agree that goal-setting, planning and decision-making are skills exhibited by self-determined people (Serna and Lausmith, 1995). A federal initiative in the USA prompted researchers to focus on pro-active rather than rehabilitative skills for youth considered at risk of underachievement and failing school. This initiative stressed the view that if adolescents believe they have some control over their lives, they may be motivated to set goals and plan steps to achieve them.

After many years of teaching a wide variety of children having special needs, I have come to realise that teaching students to take greater control and responsibility for their own learning, and thus become causal agents in their lives, is a process that cannot be achieved through traditional teaching; it requires a specially designed teaching model. The proposed intervention programme, geared to empower

Ethiopian immigrant students by teaching them self-determination skills, may be a solution.

Ethiopian adolescents, in addition to coping with difficulties due to natural physiological and psychological development, must cope with the large gap existing between the way of life in Ethiopia and that in Israel. This may result in a diminishing of their ability to play an active role in the absorption process and cause them to become passive (Dyal and Dyal, 1981). This, along with many other obstacles, encountered by Ethiopian students in the Israeli education system, has resulted in "increasing numbers of frustrated Ethiopian youths..." (The Israeli Association for Ethiopian Jews – IAEJ 2003, p. 2). This frustration has led, in many cases, to delinquency, alcoholism and drug dependency, phenomena unknown in their country of origin. Despite efforts to integrate Ethiopian adolescents into Israeli society, the situation is bleak and must be dealt with.

Making specific suggestions for change is a challenge for me; I do not pretend to know what is best, but I strongly believe in what might be better. The intervention programme proposed may be the last opportunity for these Ethiopian youths to improve their situation.

CHAPTER 4: THE TEACHING MODEL

This chapter will present the theoretical framework of the teaching model to be adopted for the purpose of this study, its development and principles. I will then specify the aims of the empirical component of this study and the research questions I wish to address.

4.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that could coherently organise this research and explain the educational difficulties Ethiopian immigrants are facing and the need for a self-determination intervention programme combines Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1930), the Theory of Constructivism (Richardson, 1997) and Feuerstein's Theory of Mediated Learning (1979). These theories are interrelated since they all subscribe to the idea that education and thinking processes occur within meaningful contexts. Each perceives individual development as taking place within the context of adult-child and peer relationships. Various theorists have suggested ways in which development is influenced by these social contexts. Socio-cultural theory, drawing heavily on the work of Vygotsky (1986), claims that the socio-cultural context has a profound implication on education in general, and on teaching and schooling in particular. The socio-cultural context may be the single, most important contributor to one's ability to become an independent, efficacious, self-determined adult (Sands et al., 1996).

At the core of Vygotsky's theory (1978) is the idea that child development is the result of the interaction between children and their social environment, including interactions with parents, teachers, classmates and siblings. Effective learning occurs when adults provide children with opportunities to master skills that are only moderately difficult and that can be successfully achieved with assistance. Vygotsky's main argument is that a child's development cannot be understood by studying the individual child only. In order to understand the individual, we must also examine the external social world in which that individual has developed (Vygotsky, 1978). Kearsley (1994) suggests that when applying Vygotsky's theory to education, the principle that should be kept in mind is that full cognitive development

requires social interaction. One of Vygotsky's most important contributions to the understanding of immigrant children's intellectual development and school achievement, especially of those undergoing rapid socio-cultural change, was his theory about the relationship between cognitive and social phenomena. He states that the development of a uniquely human, higher level of mental functioning, such as consciousness and the creation of taxonomic cognitive structures (required for academic learning), originates in daily social interaction. Vygotsky defines the zone of proximal development as the distance between a child's actual development level as determined by independent problem-solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under guidance or in collaboration with a more capable peer. The lower level of intellectual development and the lack of achievement in school, as in the case of Ethiopian immigrants, can be linked to the abrupt transition from a familiar to an unfamiliar socio-cultural environment and therefore to the lack of both the linguistic and cultural knowledge required to interact meaningfully with adults.

Constructivism is a "learning or meaning-making theory" (Richardson, 1997). It offers an explanation for the nature of knowledge through the interaction of what children already know and believe, and the ideas, events and activities with which they come into contact. Although constructivism is more of a perspective on learning than a theory, it has become popular in recent years. It is a perspective based on Piaget's work, which postulates that there are mental structures that determine how data and new information are perceived and processed and that knowledge is constructed through three mechanisms: assimilation (fitting a new experience into an existing mental structure); accommodation (revising an existing schema as the result of a new experience); and equilibrium (seeking cognitive stability through assimilation and accommodation).

The particular perspective of constructivism that is currently prevalent in the field of education is commonly referred to as social constructivism and has its origins in Vygotsky's theories. However, while Vygotsky stressed the importance of cultural and social contexts in influencing learning (namely the role played by the surrounding community, significant adults such as parents, culture, and language), one of the fundamental premises of social constructivism is that children actively construct their knowledge rather than absorb or internalise ideas through endless

practice. It emphasises the role of education in social transformation and reflects the theory of human development that places the individual within a socio-cultural context. Individuals construct knowledge in transaction with the environment and through this process both the individual and the environment are changed (Richardson, 1997). Constructivism has important implications for teaching and learning and is in line with the proposed teaching model. Firstly, the teacher is viewed not as a transmitter of knowledge but as a guide who facilitates learning. Secondly, teachers provide learning experiences that expose inconsistencies between students' current understandings and their new experiences. Thirdly, teachers engage students in their learning in an active way, using relevant problems and group interaction.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the mediated learning experience theory (Feuerstein, 1991; Feuerstein and Kaufman, 1998) makes an important distinction between cognitive difference caused by cultural distance (e.g., East-West, rural-urban) and that caused by cultural deprivation. Feuerstein hypothesised that learning develops in at least two ways: from direct exposure to stimuli, and from mediated learning experiences (MLE). MLE refers to a special type of human interaction in which a teacher or mentor selects, focuses and organises the world of stimuli for another person. A growing body of research supports various aspects of this theory, as well as the effectiveness of programmes based upon it (Greenberg, 1992).

After briefly reviewing the three theories, it is reasonable to conclude that all contribute to the understanding of learning and educational achievement., They can explain the difficulties immigrant children have in school, and can be used as a basis for the development of new attitudes and skills. We must support the empowerment of students by imparting self-determination skills. Within a positive learning environment, guided by supportive teachers, Ethiopian immigrant students may be able to learn how to exercise a real influence on their destinies and co-construct their futures.

The teacher (who, according to Feuerstein, is the mediator) is in this case the implementer of the intervention programme and can more capably guide the students to devise methods collectively to solve problems, while enabling each participant to explain his/her thoughts, and at the same time build on the thinking of others (social constructivism).

A study carried out in Israel by Kaniel and Fisherman (1991) suggested that Ethiopian immigrants have the ability to catch up with their native-born peers through appropriate intervention. The experimental group comprised 300 Ethiopian teenage boys and girls from five boarding schools. Their performance was compared with that of a smaller but otherwise similar group of Ethiopian immigrants who were required to solve the same tasks but without the benefit of mediated learning. The results not only showed a higher level of modifiability[6] in the experimental group, but a performance that exceeded that of average students in Israel .

The assumption is that mediated learning could also have a positive effect on Ethiopian immigrants' self-determination. To help them become autonomous decision-makers and be responsible for their future, educators must provide them with the tools and skills to enable them to function in this way. The proposed intervention programme may also be seen as a means to break the cycle of underachievement and dependence, and move away from a hegemonic instructional structure to autonomous, meaningful learning processes producing socially valid skills.

4.2 Development of the Model

The intervention programme for Ethiopian students is based on a teaching model promoting self-determination that was developed in Israel by Professor Shunit Reiter of Haifa University, called 'The Circle of Internalisation' ('Ma'agal Hahafnama' in Hebrew). This model involves both students and teachers. The students are encouraged to participate, make choices and learn from each other, following Vygotsky's notion that social experiences shape the way students think and interpret the world. The model helps students become increasingly independent and autonomous. Its advantages are that it is culture-free and adaptable, and recognises that there are alternative paths to solving a wide variety of problems. For the teachers, it provides a vehicle promoting the acquisition and development of skills that form the foundation for the development of self-determination.

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[6] "The theory of structural cognitive modifiability (SCM) views the human organism as open, adaptive and amenable for change. The aim of this approach is to modify the individual, emphasizing autonomous and self-regulated change. Intelligence is viewed as a propensity of the organism to modify itself when confronted with the need to do so. It involves the capacity of the individual to be modified by learning and the ability to use whatever modification has occurred for future adjustments". http://www.icelp.org/asp/Basic_Theory.shtm

The teaching model comprises a step-by-step process and was designed for use across a wide age range. Rather than merely speaking about self-determination in abstract terms, the model focuses on actually imparting self-determination skills. It was tested in a recent study conducted among young adults in Israel with physical disabilities (Reiter and Goldman, 1999). The aim of the study was to assess the extent to which this intervention programme contributed to the enhancement of self-awareness and autonomy in physically disabled participants. The results showed that it is possible to enhance autonomy among persons with special needs given a systematic programme encouraging group cohesiveness along with the development of individual skills and competencies.

The intervention in this study was based on lesson plans designed by the implementers who were the student teachers working with me (see section 5.3.1) anchored in the students' discourse and issues the students raised. The initial instructional focus involved the identification and discussion of preferences and interests, and goal-setting. For example, the implementers used four questions to enable the students to formulate their goals: What do I want to learn? What do I need to know about it? How can I learn it? How can I make this happen? Although the students were not able to articulate a direct response to the above questions, the implementers helped them by asking them about their personal interests and preferences. The next step was decision-making, a process that involved identifying options and consequences, discussing the risks related to each consequence, how each option coincided with the preference expressed in the previous sessions, and finally making the judgment and a decision as to which option was best for them. Each class session focused on a certain topic but several components were woven into each session, hence the topics were not considered discrete entities. For example, a session focusing on developing goals, intended to provide the students with experiences that would contribute to their awareness of goal-setting rather than finding a definitive answer, since goal-setting is a process, not something that can be learned in one session. Goal-setting would then be included in several other sessions as well.

Reiter's model suggests that instruction should not rely solely on the teacher; students should be encouraged to share the responsibility for determining when, what, why, where and how they learn. There is growing recognition of the

advantages of having students become more active in educational decision-making (Argon, 1997). Thus, by allowing students greater participation in goal-setting, we, as educators, have the opportunity to learn with the students and involve them in all aspects of their educational experience.

4.3 Principles of the Model

Based on my experience and on informal conversations I held with teachers, I found that one common misinterpretation of self-determination is that it is synonymous with meaning you do everything yourself. However, causal agents do not necessarily do everything for themselves; they are the catalysts in making things happen in their lives. The role of education and of teachers in attaining self-determination is to provide students with opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge and experience that will help them assert their individuality and achieve their goals.

Like all educators, teachers who work with students with learning difficulties use a variety of teaching models according to the learning characteristics and abilities of the students and the subject matter under consideration. I noted one aspect common to all of the teaching models I have encountered: they were all by and large teacher-directed (the teacher was in charge of setting the goals and objectives). The questions this raises are:

1. How can we, as teachers, teach students to become self-determined?
2. How can we move students from where they are to where they would like to be?

Or, as Wehmeyer (2000) asks: "How do we teach students with difficulties to become causal agents in their lives?"

The first step in the process is the teacher's recognition of the importance of self-determination skills. This recognition prepares educators to use curriculum designs that foster such skills. The second step requires shifting from teacher-directed instruction to student-directed models. Students with learning difficulties must learn that they are causal agents in their own lives and should be given opportunities to express preferences, make choices and then experience the outcomes. There is growing recognition of the inherent advantages in enabling students to become more involved in educational decisions (Argan, 1997). Teaching

students to take greater control and responsibility for their learning is a process not often found in traditional teacher-directed models.

Reiter's model shifts the emphasis from a behaviourist to a more holistic approach. According to her model, the concept of self-determination involves maximum autonomy in which one makes one's own choices, as well as an assessment of situations according to a clear set of values and priorities.

The teaching model is based on a change of approach, whereby a shift takes place from structured teaching (according to predetermined desired achievements) to modular teaching (focusing on processes and their outcomes) (Bruer, 1993). The two new major emphases in the guidelines are the following:

1. A holistic view of the student.
2. The group as the basic instruction unit. Individual objectives are specified for each student in two areas: personality development and the acquisition of specific skills (social, vocational and/or academic).

Wehmeyer (1996) suggests that self-determination skills should be taught by providing students with multiple opportunities to express preferences, make choices, and then experience the outcomes of their choices. He further suggests that feedback should be as non-manipulative as possible, and preference be given to providing genuine feedback, namely clear and true information that will help these students make better choices and decisions. In order to provide opportunities for this to happen, teachers should plan ongoing activities that will encourage making choices and decisions within their daily instruction.

However in addition to the above Reiter's model claims that the environmental factors are also important to the process, the suggested intervention takes into consideration both the individual student and the environment in which one lives and is expected to function.

The term 'internalisation of learning' is applicable to the model used in this study, since self determination is conceived as an on going interaction between the individual and the environment within which they function. emphasis is placed on emotional and behavioural aspects of personality development. Immigrants, and especially the Ethiopian immigrants in Israel, often face many challenges in their personal and emotional lives and in their interpersonal relationships. For this reason, this model focuses on the students' expression of their feelings, worries, frustrations,

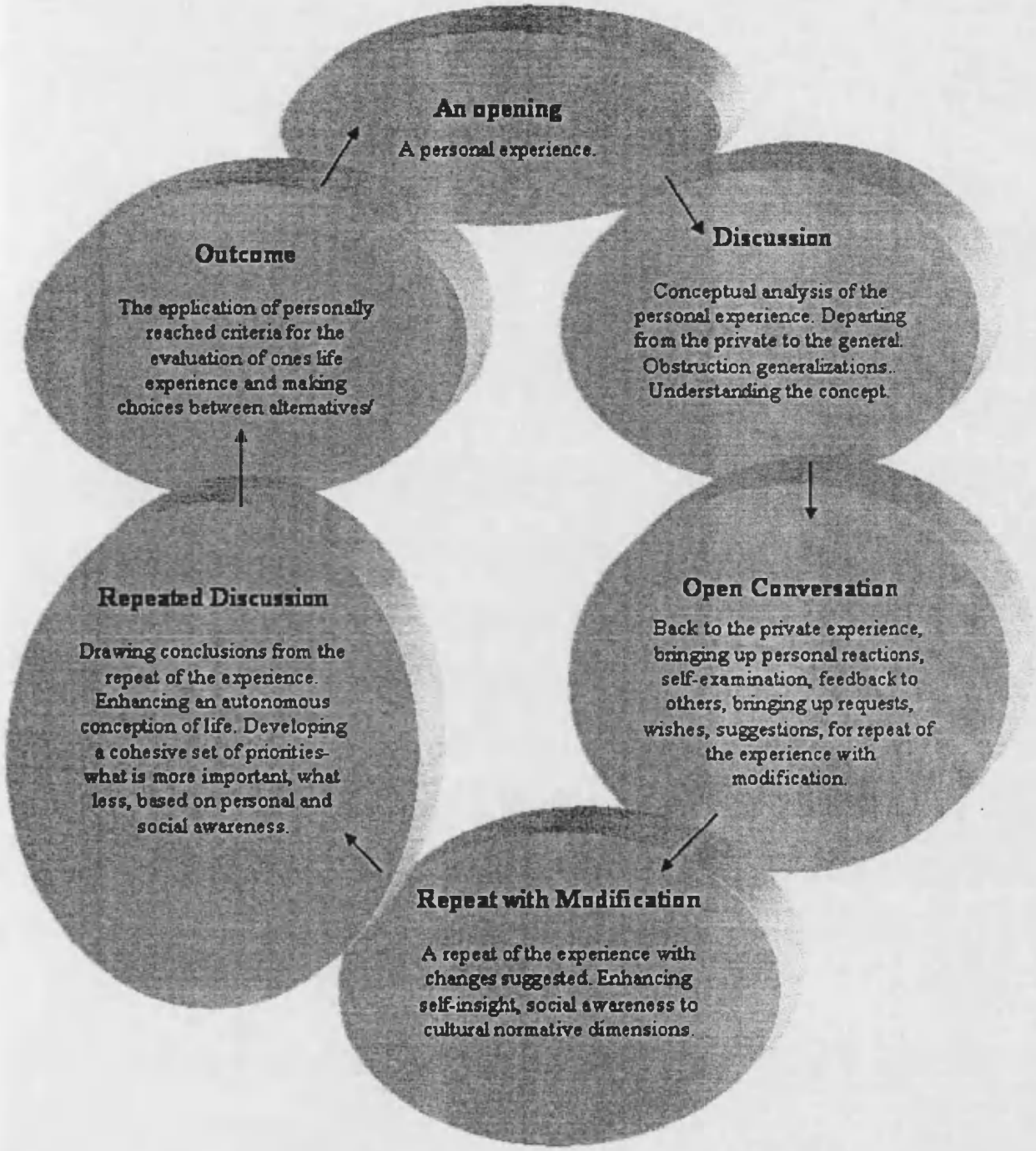
wishes, hopes and interests, as well as their personal modes of reaction to stressful situations. This is followed by an analysis of their subjective associations, personal conceptions and personal experiences, as these relate to the teaching of the new material, be it academic, social or technical.

Most modern social scientists regard the internalisation of ideas, attitudes, orientations and so on as a socialisation process in which the individual is perceived as playing an active role in learning. Although the concept of internalisation usually applies to norms and values, Reiter's model suggests that it should be applied to teaching other subjects as well. It refers to any learning that has been worked out internally by the student and incorporates some new input, be it of social values, academic knowledge, or even a new skill. For this outcome (internalisation) to be achieved, there should be a process by which students examine (individually and in a group) the relevance of whatever is being taught.

While the teacher is the initiator of new learning experiences, the students are expected to take an active part in the knowledge acquisition process. This is achieved by asking them first to express the effect that the new learning experience has on them, and then to suggest how they would like to further examine the subject matter or repeat the experience. The teacher then makes changes or modifications according students' needs and suggestions. Repeating the modified learning situation should be followed by another self-evaluation, focusing on enhanced self-knowledge, personal awareness, a heightened sensitivity to others, understanding reality constraints and opportunities, and the learning of cultural norms, mores and values (Reiter and Goldman, 1999).

Figure 4.1 presents a model-guided internalisation process based on group work.

Figure 4.1: Reiter's Model – The Process of Internalisation in Education (Reiter, 1999)



The goal of the model is to internalise skills that can be converted into tools enabling the students to help face the challenges they will encounter in the new community.

In the opening session, the teacher presents the students with a specific topic and its reference to a life experience (for example, getting to class on time), and asks them to react to it. This is followed by the second stage, during which a discussion is held (introducing relevant topics, including concepts and terms, followed by an analysis of the topic under study and clarification of definitions and generalisations (for example, discussing the process of organising time and how it could help getting to class on time). At the third stage, the participants are encouraged to express their personal reactions to and associations with the topic, and relate their past and present emotional associations to it. Using the participants' personal input combined with the new knowledge acquired, they make suggestions for replaying or recreating the experience (for example, how they feel when they come late). At the fourth stage, the group carries out role-playing simulations that encourage both self-awareness and social awareness of cultural and normative aspects (for example, how to practice getting to class on time). Finally, at the fifth stage, the discussion is repeated, and repeating the experience leads to conclusions, enhancing the perception of autonomy. In addition, a set of priorities is developed based on a better understanding of how and why the participants make personal choices through an examination of their lifestyle and understanding of why they behave in a certain way. The programme has a basic dynamic orientation and uses activities that enhance group cohesion (Fields, 1996; Bayle and Yeager, 1997).

The circle closes when the learner uses the values he/she has defined for him/herself, the knowledge accumulated, the skills developed, and the particular life experiences he/she has now personally undergone through the teaching model. These enable him/her to choose between alternatives independently. The above process is one of self-analysis and self-awareness, representing the first stage towards self-determination and an internal locus of control.

Based on my experience, it is clearly not enough just to help students undergo emotional experiences (e.g., talking about being on time and role-playing). They must be able to practice and test themselves in real-life situations as well. They must be able to process the experience, learn from it, and apply this learning. Over time, through regular repetition, such behaviours become internalised. According to the internalisation model, all aspects of the experience must be discussed. The process is long and complex, requiring constant repetition under a variety of conditions. Each

student is required to assess him/herself, express his/her own discoveries or frustrations and even propose changes after repeating the experience.

Unlike traditional teaching, emphasis in this model is not placed on teaching information or technical skills. It is holistic, since it also leads the students to relate to their feelings, thus helping them apply the concepts learned and implement them in practice. This process is apparently not just an ongoing learning process; it also enables the individual to face physical and social reality. It encourages the continued development of one's understanding of self and others, and the comprehension of one's own internal world by comparing one's behaviours and norms with those of others in the surrounding social environment.

This is the first time that an attempt has been made to evaluate an intervention programme (teaching model) geared towards enhancing self-determination skills of Ethiopian immigrant students in Israel. The following unusual educational needs of the Ethiopian children had to be taken into consideration: 1) the wide gap existing between them and their classmates that must be overcome; and 2) the need to implement innovative techniques in order to bridge this gap.

The model's strength lies in the fact that all students, including those who have had limited life experiences and possess limited choice-making, problem-solving and goal-setting skills, will benefit from the instruction presented here. They will be exposed to these activities and through repeated use of the model should be able to carry them out better independently and improve their ability in making effective choices.

4.4 Study Aims and Research Questions

Ethiopian immigrants confront enormous differences between the two cultures. Over the years, despite the best intentions, generous budgets allocated for absorption and efforts not to repeat past mistakes, the process of Ethiopian integration into Israeli society has proven to be much slower and more painful than envisioned in the original optimistic appraisals. In the sphere of education, Ethiopian students are doing poorly, despite cognitive intervention programmes.

The aim of this research is to explore how an intervention programme promoting self-determination skills can help young people in becoming autonomous

and causal agents in their own lives. To this end, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Is the "internalisation teaching model" capable of enhancing self-determination in culturally different students?
2. What conditions hinder or facilitate the students' learning in this case?
3. What are teachers' perceptions regarding the unique needs of Ethiopian immigrants that will lead to students' empowerment and help reduce cultural gaps in school and society?

The following chapter will discuss the appropriate method for carrying out a case study of an intervention programme in order to evaluate its effectiveness, the specific context of the study and the procedures implemented, based on the model described above.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the method chosen for the empirical research, describes the specific context of the intervention programme and the procedures used for data collection.

5.1 Reasons for Choosing the Case Study Method

All researchers conduct their studies on the basis of a set of beliefs or assumptions that make up a particular worldview or paradigm, guiding their inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Lincoln and Guba (2000) claim that it is this set of beliefs that guides researchers in their endeavours to interpret the world.

In deciding upon my topic of research, it was necessary to probe my own beliefs and worldview. Although my background is in social sciences, I have always been predominantly inclined towards the positivist paradigm, characterised by the assumption that an objective reality exists that can be understood as a fixed truth (Burns, 2000). However, in the field of education and especially regarding the topic under study, applying only the positivist paradigm made no sense, since realities can rarely be compartmentalised where human relationships are concerned.

Case study method was selected for the use in this thesis, because it was the best way of obtaining data that could help me answer the research questions. Yin notes (1994), that case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

For this study of the effectiveness of the intervention programme, I combined quantitative and qualitative approaches. Because the intervention was not introduced into a sterile laboratory, but rather into a social environment with features that may affect the intervention program. I found the quantitative and qualitative methods to be appropriate rather than a purely quantitative analysis, which may obscure some of the important information being sought, when trying to assess the effectiveness of an educational intervention. According to Stake (2000), when the aim is a better understanding of the human experience, the case study is the appropriate method. Stake mentions that the most interesting studies in the

spheres of education and social studies involve people acting in interactive organisational frameworks, and case studies provide an in-depth portrayal of complex situations, such as a specific intervention or the implementation of a pedagogical innovation. Social scientists in particular have made widespread use of this method, which examines contemporary real-life situations and provides the basis for the application of ideas and methods. I sought to describe an intervention programme in a particular school and decided to adopt Stake's (2000) advice and employ the intrinsic case study method in the belief that this is the best strategy of inquiry when seeking an in-depth understanding, given the limited time and resources available to carry out my study.

Calderhead (1996, p. 25) asserts:

> *"Within a positivist tradition, professional knowledge is viewed as a set of law like generalizations which can be identified through classroom research and applied by practitioners. The interpretative tradition, on the other hand, seeks the meaning that humans attach to the interpersonal and social aspects of their lives and views meaning as being context dependent Explicit knowledge exists in the form of case studies and serves to generate ways of viewing situations and solving problems."*

Researchers have often debated the relative merits of particular methods, including the use of the case study method. There are various benefits to using a case study approach to research, especially in comparison to other methodologies. Case studies are generally the preferred strategy when "how" and "why" questions are posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (Yin, 1994). According to Yin, a case study is an examination of a specific phenomenon, such as a process (e.g., an ongoing intervention programme), a person (e.g., a teacher or student), an institution (e.g., a school or a social group), or any other entity with limitations determined by time, place and the participants involved. Yin (1994) makes a careful distinction between case study research and ethnographic research. It is easy to confuse the two, because they both involve studying something within its real-life context; however, ethnographic research involves direct, detailed observations, whereas in case study research, the researcher can examine data from a variety of sources and does not actually need to collect evidence first-hand. Case study research can be based on any

combination of qualitative and quantitative evidence, and can even consist of qualitative information alone.

Case study methods involve collecting and recording data about a case or cases, and preparing a report or presenting the case. The collection of data on site, termed "fieldwork," generally involves participant or non-participant observation, interviewing and collecting documentary evidence (Stenhouse, 1988).

Although Bassey (1999, p. 44) warns that the case study method is not easy, because the researcher must analyse and interpret the data so as to be able to make a coherent report, which is long enough to be meaningful and short enough to be readable, he nevertheless sees the advantage of case studies and summarises: "Case studies are carried out systematically and critically; if they are aimed at the improvement of education, if they are reliable, then they are valid forms of educational research.

Case study research, while an appropriate research approach for studying the effectiveness of the intervention programme, was not without limitations. A frequent criticism is that it is difficult to make generalisations derived from results obtained from case studies because of their inherent subjectivity, and because they are based on qualitative subjective data that is generalizable only within particular contexts. Yin's (1994) response to this is that one also cannot generalise from a single experiment. Case studies are not supposed to be statistical samples that can be extrapolated to describe widespread phenomena, but should provide material that can be analysed as part of a theoretical proposition (Yin, 1994). Another criticism of case studies is that they are time-consuming and very labour-intensive due to their depth in seeking to cover a particular topic. Yin (1994) concedes that this is often true but should not be so, if the research is conducted well. He also points out that people tend to confuse case study research with ethnographic research, which requires long periods of observation and/or participation in the field, unlike the case study method.

In this thesis I followed Yin's three principles for data collection: the use of multiple sources of evidence; keeping a case study database; and maintaining a chain of evidence by citing specific data in the results. When the features of a case study method are well understood, it can be a valuable method having distinctive characteristics that make it very suitable for many types of investigations.

According to Adelman et al. (1980, quoted by Choen and Manion, 1994, p. 123):

> *"Case studies are a step to action, they begin in a world of action and contribute to it. Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use: for staff development, for internal institutional feedback; for formative evaluation; and for educational policymaking. All the above are persuasive reasons for choosing this methodological approach."*

Throughout this study, which is a case study of an intervention program, the goals of exploration and description took precedence over generalizability and predictability.

The documentation used for this study includes interviews, school records and reports, diaries kept by the implementers of the intervention programme, and my observations recorded in a research journal. By studying the documentation available, observing the intervention programme and interviewing the teachers, I was able to develop insights into the attitudes of schools towards their immigrant students.

Any implications of the research results will be used for educational purposes, rather than for the development of a generalised theory, although it could contribute to theory. In a study concentrating on a specific problem within a specific environment, the results are best judged by their potential of being immediately applicable for the purpose of improving that same environment.

5.2 The Specific Context – the School

The school's location, history and organisational structure constitute the context of the intervention programme and affect both the teachers' approach and the interactions between them and their students. Information about the school context will facilitate understanding the framework in which the intervention programme took place.

From a historical perspective, Israeli boarding school settings from 1933[7] onward were characterised by internal cohesion. The physical configuration of the

[7] Established in 1933 by teacher and pianist Recha Freier in Germany, Youth Aliya initially rescued thousands of children from Nazi Germany. It was later adopted by Hadassah founder and pre-State leader Henrietta Szold and became a Jewish Agency department. Over the years the organization brought children to Israel from the Middle East and North Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Soviet Union and most recently Ethiopia and the Russian-speaking republics.

buildings and the development of close relationships with and among the students (organised according to age and task groups) created a closed framework. Educators perceived the students as being in need of nurturing and training to fulfil useful roles in the "self-actualising society" that was to become Israel (Kashti, 1991).

Over the past two decades, Israeli boarding schools have tended to concentrate largely on admitting the disadvantaged children of new immigrants. The rationale underlying the decision to separate these adolescents from their homes and place them in residential schools was to avoid the conflicting influences of different cultures and to expose them for several years to the daily educational influences of the residential institution, whose task was to act as a re-socialising agent of mainstream culture, meant to help their adjustment and improve their functioning in society (Kashti, 1993; Kashti and Arieli, 1987). Run by a head-teacher, a deputy head-teacher and a teaching staff, the boarding school serves adolescents from all parts of the country.

The two-storey boarding school in this case study is part of a youth village, situated in a rural setting in northern Israel. The school is characterised by its policy on religious education, which is reflected in the study schedule (see Appendix E1 & E2) It seeks to develop an understanding of Jewish religion and the application of Jewish principles to everyday life, while placing less emphasis on other subjects.

5.3 School Population and Participants in the Study

At the time of the study the student population comprised 150 adolescents between the age of 15 and 18. About 90% of the students were Ethiopian, 8% were from the former Soviet Union and 2% were native Israelis. The majority did not have a good command of the Hebrew language, and typically had reading difficulties requiring remedial teaching (most read below the Grade 3 level) and were considered to have low motivation. All of the students participating in this intervention programme arrived in Israel between 1992 and 2003 (school records).

In a case study, the researcher who wishes to describe a given population does not presume to be able to get to know every individual, but focuses on a relatively small representative group of people, using this group to draw tentative conclusions about other members of the population. In this case study, two main criteria were chosen for inclusion in the intervention programme: students who were

Ethiopian immigrants and those who were among the youngest in the school. The youngest students were chosen on the assumption that they were more easily influenced and would thus have a greater chance of benefiting from the intervention programme. The school's head-teacher and teachers helped identify the students who best fit these criteria, and two (parallel) groups of seven students aged 15-16 years were formed. Once the group was formed, the implementers and myself were invited to the students' classes to introduce ourselves and tell the students what we were going to teach. We also mentioned that, although they were chosen by the school, the lessons were optional and the students that would opt not to participate would go on with their regular school schedule. The students agreed to take part in the intervention programme .

5.3.1 Implementation of the Teaching Model

As a teacher in a teachers' college and a teacher educator, I decided to suggest participation in this intervention programme to my student teachers who were in their last year of Special Education training. All of my students are newly qualified teachers participating in an in-service course towards additional licensing in Special Education.

Two teachers (from a total of nine volunteers) in their last year of training were recruited to implement the intervention programme, based on their prior experience in working with adolescents. They underwent the following preparation: They attended one orientation session, presenting an overview of the model, and four workshops, each lasting 4 hours. During the workshops each stage of the model was presented in detail and practice was provided. At first the participants in the workshops practiced among themselves and later they were asked to suggest situations or topics from their own teaching experience, which led to a series of activities identical to the ones they would use with their students.,They implemented the programme only after they felt sufficiently confident and demonstrated the skills considered necessary for effective use of the model. Then they were introduced to the students and the students were allowed to ask them questions. The intervention programme was implemented over a period of six months (January to June), used during 32 lessons, taking place twice a week, each lesson lasting approximately 50

minutes. The school administration, teachers and implementers had decided to start the intervention in January (mid-year) in order to allow time for training the implementers, and working with students who were already used to the school.

During the intervention, the implementers received ongoing support, guidance and assistance (every six weeks) from Professor S. Reiter, the programme's developer. I came to the school once a week to observe the teachers in their implementation of the model.

5.4 Data Collection

Yin (1994) suggests using multiple sources of data. The rationale for using multiple sources of data collection is to facilitate triangulation of evidence. Triangulation increases the reliability of the data and the process of gathering it. In the context of data collection, triangulation further serves to corroborate the data gathered from various sources. Consistent with case study design recommended by Stake (1995), the data sources included the following:

5.4.1 Arc Self-Determination Scale

A pre- and post-test of the Arc Self-Determination Scale (Wehmeyer and Kelchner, 1995) was used in order to measure the effectiveness of the intervention programme. The pre-test was given immediately after introducing the intervention programme to the students. The post-test was given again at the end of the intervention programme.

The scale was originally designed, field-tested and validated for use with students having mild levels of cognitive and developmental disabilities, mental retardation and learning disabilities. Field-testing indicated that it was applicable to students with emotional and physical problems as well, and could be administered to either individuals or groups. It could also be conveyed orally and, in fact, reading each item aloud may ensure that students understand what is being requested. If a student had difficulty writing responses, teachers or others could transcribe the student's responses (Wehmeyer and Kelchner, 1995).

Self-determination is measured using a 72-item scale, providing data that correspond not only to four essential characteristics of self-determination, as proposed by Wehmeyer (1996, 1998), but also to an overall assessment of

self-determination. The first section measures student autonomy, including the student's independence and the degree to which he/she acts on the basis of personal beliefs, values, interests and abilities. High scores in this section reflect high autonomy. The second section measures student self-regulation, specifically in two sub-domains: interpersonal cognitive problem-solving, and goal-setting and task performance. High scores reflect effective social problem-solving and goal-oriented behaviours. The third section indicates psychological empowerment. Students choose items measuring psychological empowerment using a forced-choice method. High scores reflect positive perception of control. The final section measures self-actualisation, including self-awareness and knowledge. High scores reflect high self-actualisation levels.

The Arc Self-Determination Scale was standardised with 500 students with and without cognitive disabilities in rural, urban and suburban school districts in five States of the USA. The scale's concurrent criterion-related validity was established by showing the relationships between the Arc Self-Determination Scale and related conceptual measures. The scale has satisfactory construct validity, including factorial validity, established by repeated factor analysis, and discriminative validity. It has adequate internal consistency (α = 0.90; Wehmeyer, 1996a), and has been used in several research studies (Sands et al.,1999; Zhang, 1998).

The maximum number of points attainable is 148; higher scores reflect higher self-determination. This scale was used to measure the degree to which instruction using the teaching model enhanced the students' self-determination. To evaluate this, all students were asked to complete a questionnaire prior to and following instruction.

The Scale (Appendix D) was chosen because it focuses on autonomous adjustment rather than on types of behaviour to be managed, and because it is designed to be used by the students themselves, rather than by third parties such as assistant teachers, tutors and so on. It is an easy-to-use assessment device, in which the student identifies his/her strengths and limitations related to self-determination skills. It should also be noted that it has been translated into Hebrew

In this study, only sections three and four of the Arc Self-Determination Scale were used. My prime interest was to teach self-determination skills using a new teaching model developed in Israel and measure its effectiveness on psychological

empowerment and self-actualisation. I wanted to ensure student cooperation and thus did not use a cumbersome questionnaire that might have deterred the respondents. Moreover, the first section of the scale did not seem relevant to the study because the students participating in it were living in a boarding school and only went home once in three weeks for a weekend visit.

When the questionnaire was piloted with the students in another class in the school, they seemed to be insulted by the questions and interpreted them to mean that we, the teaching staff, did not think they were able to perform such simple tasks. One student shouted angrily: "*This is for dummies*," and continued, "*You think we can't do this! I am not going to write anything!*" The rest of the students nodded in agreement. In response to other specific questions, one student declared: "I can take care of my own clothes" (Question 2) and "I can keep myself clean and well-dressed" (Question 6), implying that there was no need to consider teaching such activities.

Questions 7-32, involving recreational activities and the use of free time, were irrelevant since the students lived in a boarding school and did not really have the freedom to choose their activities. Everything was pre-planned and free time was spent mainly on doing homework or participating in organised social activities. In the section relating to community involvement, Question 18 for example, "I go to restaurants that I like" or Question 20 "I go shopping or spend time at shopping centres or malls" did not apply to their environment.

In the self-regulation section, the students were asked to write what happened in the middle of a story (which was left out), connecting the given beginning of the story to its end. For example, Question 35 presents this story: It begins – "Your friends are acting as though they are mad at you. You are upset about this." It ends – "You and your friends are now getting along just fine." Here the students were asked to provide an example of what could have happened between the beginning and the end. When this section was piloted, the students' vocabulary was found to be very limited and, moreover, they were afraid to answer. For example, one student asked out loud: "*What do you need this for*?" and "What are you going to do with this?" He immediately added: "I am not changing schools again," implying that this might be used for future student evaluation and placement.

Another example of serious hesitation and difficulty was when a student said: "*So, what do you want me to write*?" while most students just said: *"I don't understand what you want.*" They kept asking questions, clearly indicating that they did not want to do this section. Their reactions during the pilot were indeed revealing.

The third section seemed to be acceptable to the students and they cooperated willingly, mainly because they understood the questions and found the forced choice format easy. The final section, relating to psychological empowerment, also seemed relevant to the study and to the goals of the teaching model, since the model used in this study clearly involved a process leading to empowerment, defined according to Perkins and Zimmerman (1995), as "a process through which people gain control over their lives" (p. 57). Psychological empowerment refers to an individual's sense of control or the belief that one can influence important aspects of one's environment. Some writers, such as Zimmerman (1995), proposed that psychological empowerment should also include the motivation to exert control, a critical understanding of both the setting and the means to exert influence effectively, as well as specific actions designed to influence outcomes, such as meeting with one's school head-teacher to request support for a desired change.

5.4.2 Interviews

Interviews with the participants' homeroom teachers were conducted in order to gain insight into the teachers' perception/assessment of the students' participation. This included how they, the teachers, perceive these students and whether they had observed any changes in the participating students' behaviour. Within case study research, interviews that are face-to-face verbal interchanges are the main form of data collection (Stake, 2000) and provide a powerful means towards understanding the participants' perceptions (Burns 2000). Stake (2000) points out that this creates a fundamental problem, because a degree of ambiguity always exists when dealing with both spoken and written statements.

The interviewing method contains at least two stages in which confusion may occur: in the phrasing of the question, and in the coding or reporting of the answer. Both these potential pitfalls must be taken into account in analysing the data collected. In-depth, semi-structured interviews took place, each lasting

approximately two hours. They revolved around four themes: the interviewee's background, the way the teachers defined their roles, the teachers' understanding of the student's difficulties, and the way the teachers perceived the students.

I chose semi-structured interviewing because I considered it to have several advantages, facilitating a fuller understanding of the case under investigation. May (1998) emphasises two important advantages of a semi-structured interview: it gives the interviewer greater possibility to probe beyond the answers and thus enter into a dialogue with the interviewee; and it allows people to answer more on their own terms than the standardised interview usually permits, while still providing a better structure for comparison than the unstructured interview.

The interview was selected to enhance the strength of the case study with more detailed information, most likely to be obtained in view of the face-to-face intimacy of the personal interview and the interviewer's skill in making the interviewee feel at ease and wanting to participate willingly in the study. Another advantage was that topics related to the research aims could be focused on, while allowing the interviewees considerable freedom to express their reactions. The interview enabled the respondents to use language that was natural to them, and express their perspective without being directed by the researcher's conceptions of the problems addressed. The interviews also made full use of the time available and allowed for significant points to be dealt with. The interviews were essentially systematic, enabling comparing statements made by various interviewees (Sabar and Ben Yehoshua, 1999).

Before each interview, I spent time establishing a rapport with the teacher, explaining the purpose of the study, assuring confidentiality of responses, and indicating the likely length of the interview. I asked the questions and the teachers responded. While this strategy enabled complex issues to be explored in detail (Miller and Glassner, 1997), this also meant that the interview schedule was not followed rigidly. The interviews held with the teachers evolved around their backgrounds and experiences, how they perceived themselves in the school and how they perceived the students and related to their difficulties.

Five teachers of the immigrant children were interviewed at the time of the intervention programme (four women and one man), all certified teachers with many years of experience (9-20 years) indicating that they were interested in expressing

their views. Four of them had never taught at another school, while one teacher had worked at another school for one year before joining this school. The two implementers of the programme were also interviewed. The interviews were conducted orally and I took notes while the interviewee was speaking, since most of the teachers objected to being taped, as one teacher put it:

> *"I will answer all your questions and help you if you need any help with the students, but I do not want to have it on tape."*

Another teacher said:

> *"I feel uncomfortable speaking into a tape-recorder."*

The interviews with the implementers were tape-recorded and transcribed. All the interviews were conducted in Hebrew and lasted approximately one and a half to two hours. The length of time was due to the fact that the teachers felt they had a lot to say and insisted on answering all my questions as honestly and as deeply as they could, making sure that I knew what they meant, and asking me several times during the interview whether I understood what they were trying to tell me. For example they would say:

> *"Do you know what I mean?" or "Do you understand what I am trying to tell you?" "Does all this make sense to you?"*

When they were not sure I understood, they said:

> *"Let me give you an example."*

All of the interviews were conducted in Hebrew. One of the interviews was recorded, the rest were written down during the interview in the form of minutes. Identical questions were prepared for all the interviews and then used as part of a conversation. All the interviews were held in the school, the atmosphere was relaxed, and there was ample time for the interview. The interviewees cooperated willingly (although most refused tape-recording the interview). Some came back later in the day or the next time I was at the school and wanted to add some points they considered important.

In addition to the interviews, some corridor conversations were held (Mumby and Clair, 1997). The school staff initiated most of these talks.

5.4.3 Non-Participant Observations

Observation was used as a form of data collection to gain insight into both the behaviour of the students during the intervention program, and the interaction between the implementer and the students. I observed them at school in general (corridors, or during recess) and in the classroom. My main motive for employing this strategy was to allow their behaviour and interactions to speak for them (Burns, 2000). These students being immigrants and described as passive may not have been able to express all the actions in words. Throughout the intervention I visited the school once a week for the duration of the intervention program. At school I was a non –participant, however I wish to use this term loosely because I was not able to be completely aloof, interaction naturally occurred between the implementer , the classroom teacher and me with the students. The students knew me, since I had spent time with them before the official research study began, so my presence did not effect their behaviour.

5.4.4 Reflective Diaries

Reflective diaries, written by the teachers implementing the programme, enabled me to follow the students' internalisation process from the teachers' perspectives. Dewey (1933) was one of the early theorists who talked about reflection in education. He viewed reflection as a special form of problem solving that should be viewed as an active and deliberate cognitive process. Schon (1987) sees reflection as a process tied to action, and talks about the need for "reflection–in-action." He conceptualizes reflection-in action as an ongoing process, based on continually thinking about one's actions and then modifying them accordingly. In this case the implementers were asked to use the following guidelines in writing their diaries: Presentation of the topic

Students' responses (both affective and cognitive)

Process taking place during the meeting

Interaction among the students

Did the quiet students participate?

Any tensions?

Any suggestions to solve the problems?

Any individual initiative how to proceed?

How much intervention by the teacher?

Which stage of the model has the class reached?

Any expressions of feelings?

Any evidence of new concepts internalized?

Any evidence of ability to choose judiciously between alternatives?

Any evidence of stating goals

General impression

5.4.5 Collection of Documents

By using various documents, it is possible to arrive at a deeper understanding of the issue under study and facilitate the validation of the patterns existing in the field. Anderson and Arsenault (1998) also emphasise that various documents may provide interesting insights into the values of organisations and cultures, thus it appears important to collect many and various documents. In this case the documents used were weekly timetables, circulars to the staff, informing them of school activities and regulations, and the students' school records.

5.5 Analysis Framework

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention programme (Reiter's Model,1999), adapted to teach self-determination skills to Ethiopian immigrant students within a specific boarding school setting. Quantitative assessment was used for this purpose. However, it was clear from the start that further investigation would be needed to provide an in-depth understanding of the results obtained, within the framework of the case study method chosen. In fact, the data derived from the interviews, observations, teachers' diaries and the documents proved to be extremely valuable.

To interpret the data derived from the interviews, the content analysis method was applied (Strauss and Corbin 1990, Glaser 1998). When using qualitative techniques such as content analysis, it is important for the person analysing the data to allow themes to emerge naturally, rather than to attempt to impose a preconceived set of themes on the data. The theory is *emergent* – revealed by the data (Glaser (1998); the aim is to discover the theory implicit in the data. In line with this approach, in the process of analysing the data I read and re-read the interviews to enable me to code the emergent themes.

The analysis of the data was carried out in the following way: The first two interview transcripts were analysed together in order to develop the initial codes and themes, using the constant comparative method, and each transcript was open-coded. These codes were then compared to form categories, which suggested an emergent theory. "Making comparisons assists the researcher in guarding against bias... comparisons also help to achieve greater precision (the grouping of like and only like phenomena)" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; p 9).

I examined each interview transcript line-by line with a series of questions in mind, for example 'what is going on here?' 'what could this be about?' 'what is being referred to here?' and 'what are the important issues?' Such questions assisted in revealing codes that subsequently accounted for the practice of the teachers. When a code was allocated, it was stored in a separate file in the computer along with a short description and a summary of the reasons for having been included under this particular code. As coding of new interview transcripts continued, the number of expressions of the teachers' views of their students grew. It is important to note that this level of coding was not merely a counting exercise to find out how often an event or statement occurred (although later on they were also counted), but was aimed at collecting a set of indicators that existed as a potentially significant concept. Subsequently the codes were developed into conceptual categories.

Having developed the conceptual categories, I then went on to look for connections between the categories. All categories were related to each other in terms of their types, properties and consequences. As this level of coding proceeded, the interrelationships among different categories became more apparent and began to emerge

> *"They all have a tale to tell"... "They carry a bag of unresolved home problems with them, they often have to do chores that children at their age in a modern society would not do, such as caring for the old members of the family or for younger brothers and sisters."*

This was identified as a category concerning the students' background.

> *"You know the kinds of homes they come from? They are deficient homes!"*

was another statement that seems to imply, or even assert, that the child's home makes no positive contribution to the students' habits and learning ability. These statements are linked and both reflect the students' background, so they were

subsumed under a higher-level category of "students' past life". Soon the patterns and links began to emerge as 4 major categories:

1) The students' past experiences.
2) Their present level of functioning.
3) Expectations regarding the students' future, including the way the teachers see their work in this particular school and their having to deal with new immigrants from Ethiopia.
4) Teachers' perceptions of the skills needed for integration in society.

It should be mentioned that when I started coding, I was looking for metaphors that might help me understand how the teachers perceive the students. However, as I was reading, organizing and re-reading the interviews, and observations it soon became clear that the statements were emphatic and that there was an obvious link to the dimension of time, since some of the statements related to situations in the past, while others related to the present and still others to the future.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The first section (relating to Question 1) presents the quantitative results of the pre- and post-tests, while the second section (relating to Questions 2 and 3) presents the findings of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews after applying content analysis. In some cases data derived from observations, informal conversations and school documentation were also provided.

The qualitative data will be used to explain or assist in understanding the quantitative results obtained. The tables presented in answer to each research question will help to orient the reader to the major findings of this case study. Evidence supporting the findings is presented following each table.

6.1 Quantitative Results of the Pre- and Post-Tests

Question 1: Is the 'internalisation teaching model' capable of enhancing the self-determination skills of culturally different students?

In order to answer this question, pre- and post-questionnaires (see Appendix D) based on the Arc Self-determination Scale (Wehmeyer and Kalchner, 1995) were used and analysed by a paired-sample t-test, examining possible differences in self-determination, resulting from the implementation of the model. In order to ensure maximum reliability of the pre- and post-test items used, a Cronbach analysis of the test items was carried out (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Reliability of pre- and post-test items

Dimension	Reliability (α Cronbach)	Average	SD	Range
Psychological Empowerment Pre-test	0.76	0.77	0.23	1.27-0.44
Psychological Empowerment Post-test	0.75	0.73	0.24	1.06-0.38
Self-realisation Pre-test	0.77 (α increased from 0.67 after deleting items 58, 59, 66)	0.601	0.23	0.92-0
Self-realisation Post-test	0.70 (α increased from 0.65 after deleting item 58,59,66)	0.67	0.205	1-0.17

Figure 6.1 presents the changes in psychological empowerment and self-actualisation. As can be seen in the above table in the self realization pre and post test (rows three and four) three items were deleted in order to increase the Cornbach coefficient (x). To allow a better convergence of items.

Figure 6.1: Changes in psychological empowerment and self-actualisation according to pre- and post-intervention scores

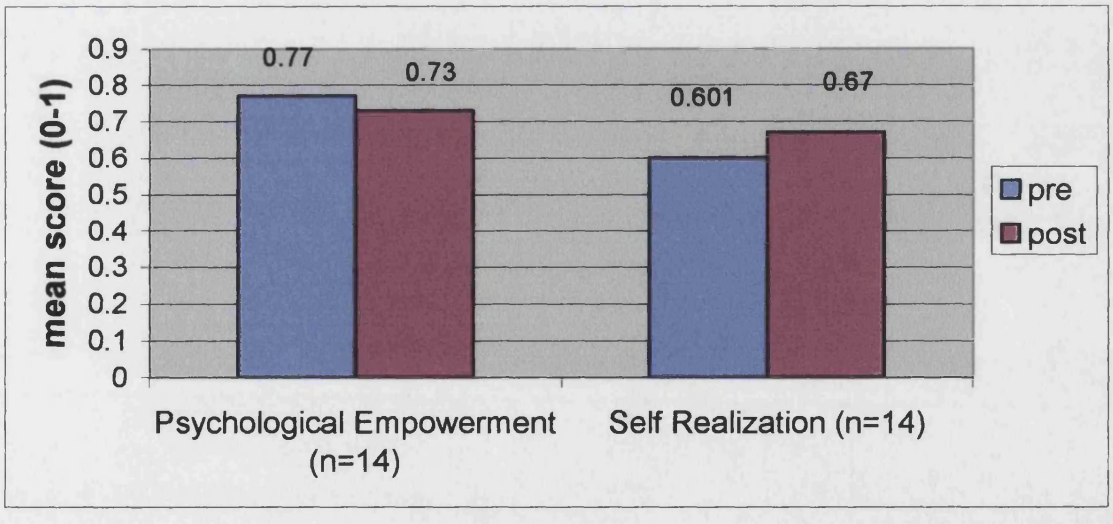


Table 6.2 presents the range of these changes.

Table 6.2: Range of changes

Dimension	Mean Change	SD Change	Range of Change	Significance of Change
Empowerment	-0.03	0.39	+0.56- (-0.80)	t (13)=0.37, n.s.
Psychological Actualisation	+0.06	0.307	+0.45- (-0.83)	t (13)=0.805, n.s.

As can be seen in the above table the mean change is insignificant ($p>.05$)

These findings indicate that the pre- and post-intervention results did not differ on a statistically significant level. Some improvement was observed in the area of self-actualisation (from 0.60 to 0.67), despite the relatively short intervention period (six months, twice a week). However, the result is not significant and should therefore be ignored, as it could be due to chance.

The relatively meagre results of the implementation of the model found in this study were contrary to my expectations, based on studies carried out in the USA and Israel with populations ranging from severely mentally retarded students to students with varying learning disabilities and difficulties (Reiter, 1999). The two teachers implementing the intervention programme also came to the conclusion that the effects of the intervention were surprisingly limited. When asked during the interview if they felt the programme had an effect on the students, one implementer replied:

> *"There were signs that showed a slight difference which could not be explained by things done at home or with their classroom teachers, for example raising problems that bothered them, or suggesting different possibilities for dealing with the problems raised."*

The second implementer added:

> *"Six months is a short time and in between there was a holiday. One needs a lot more time. I think this intervention made a positive contribution. Maybe we didn't cause a big change, but we proved that it is possible to create changes."*

This year, when I came to the school to speak with the new principal of the school (five months after the implementation of the intervention programme), some of the students who had participated in the intervention programme approached me and asked:

"Are you here again for the project? Will it take place this year as well?"

One boy did not ask, but just declared:

"If there is a project again this year, I want to participate, it was fun!"

These statements support the quantitative findings, suggesting that there are signs the intervention did have some effect – especially the latter statement, suggesting that this particular student had now learned to express the desire for choice and enjoyment in learning. It is possible that if the sample were larger or the intervention longer, the tendency towards change might have been more evident. However, what proved more interesting was the qualitative data.

6.2 Findings of the Qualitative Data

Question 2: What conditions hinder or facilitate students' learning in this case?

The findings reveal several serious problems that schools in general and the school in this study in particular must understand and address to meet the unique needs of Ethiopian immigrant students. On the whole, the findings indicate that there are considerable obstacles to the educational success of these immigrant students.

During the interviews the teachers focused on the obstacles to the students' learning as they perceived them. It became clear that their responses could be categorized as referring to obstacles created by

1. The students' past,
2. The students' current difficulties and,
3. The students' prospects for the future.

The teachers tend to believe that the factors impeding the students' learning stem from the interplay of their past school performance, family background and learning difficulties, all of which appear to lead to their passive behaviour. These beliefs affect the teachers' attitudes, creating pre-conceptions about the students' future functioning. While focusing on the students' difficulties, the teachers also exposed their own difficulties in teaching the immigrant students.

6.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions of How the Students' Past Affects their Performance

The teachers' beliefs as they emerged from the interviews (see Table 6.3) focused on the state of the students' prior knowledge and family background as being the sources of both their learning difficulties and problems in adjusting to new situations. The responses also referred to suspected but undetected learning disabilities and to cultural background.

Table 6.3: Teachers' perceptions of how the students' past affects their performance

Teachers' Perceptions	Number of statements	%	Examples
Prior learning experience (lack of learning skills)	39	45.3	*They don't have tools for learning because no one taught them how to learn before they arrived here.*
Family background	18	20.9	*They bring the problems from home with them to school.*
Undetected learning disabilities	14	16.3	*They are restless and not focused.*
Cultural background	15	17.4	*They relate differently to time.* *Even at home they are used to being told what to do*

Total number of statements referring to the students' past = 86

Prior learning experience

The teachers spoke about the students' limited experience of school study and the difficulties this created both for them as teachers and for their students:

> *"They come from small villages, with limited learning experiences, and for years they have not gone to school. The emphasis there (in Ethiopia) was not on education."*
>
> *"They did not live in cities, and were used to tending herds of cattle."*
>
> *"For years no one tried to teach them. They carry with them years of failure; experience of school was negative."*

The following conversation with a 15-year-old student supports the teachers' claim regarding their lack of effective prior learning experience of schooling;

however it also suggests that the students are willing to speak about it. When I asked him what he had studied in Ethiopia, the boy said:

> *"I only attended school (in Ethiopia) until the third grade, and then I stopped because I had to work and help my family."*

I asked what kind of work he did and he replied:

> *"Work that small children do. Now I am here and it is very difficult for me. I want to know how to read."*

Undetected learning disabilities

In the interviews, teachers stated that a full diagnostic assessment should be made of Ethiopian students' suspected learning disabilities, which they felt delayed their progress, contributing to learning difficulties and resulting in passivity:

> *"In my opinion, their difficulties stem from a combination of both poor learning skills and undetected learning disabilities."*

> *"Learning is difficult for them; they are not focused, they have difficulties concentrating on the lesson, so they just wait for me to do the things for them."*

This suggests that teachers misinterpreted abilities of culturally diverse students because of their foreignness. The culturally different students find themselves in a disadvantaged position.

Family background

Table 6.4 shows that 20.9% of the teachers' comments relating to the causes of students' passivity and learning difficulties referred to their family background. Teachers spoke of poverty, defining it not merely as lack of money, but as a socio-economic situation stemming from immigration, such as high unemployment, poor housing and dysfunctional families. The following are examples of teachers' comments:

> *"In my opinion, the difficulties are a direct result of the kind of home they come from. Some of the homes are headed by a single parent due to divorce; at home they have younger brothers or sisters and are living in poverty."*

"They go home once in three weeks for a weekend and when they return, they don't know what we want from them. They bring the problems from home with them to school."

"It is the world they come from, poor broken homes, with only the mother or grandparents around."

"I am sure that this (their learning difficulties) is a result of poverty and a culture of poverty. I try to tell them that they can't do the things here (at school) that they are used to doing at home."

The teachers appeared to see the homes of Ethiopian immigrant students as deficient, as a way of explaining their lack of study skills and inability to learn.

Cultural background

Although cultural background should not be separated from the family setting, the separation was made because teachers appeared to see them differently. They identified the home situation with socio-economic factors and related cultural background to values and the way of life.

"They are never on time, because in their culture time has a different meaning."

During an observation, I witnessed the following situation :

Teacher: "Please listen, I am going to ask a question."
Student: "Just a minute, what are we learning here if all we do is talk?"
Teacher (shaking her head in disbelief): "Everything we do here is for the purpose of learning."

After the lesson was over she remarked to me:

"See, this is what I meant (referring to what the student had just said). Did you notice? They don't know what it means to learn."

This dialogue clearly demonstrates the difference in pupils' and teachers' perceptions of the learning process. Another teacher added:

"The only subject they like is Bible lessons, because they like to listen, and don't have to be active, the stories are familiar and it is part of their culture."

Teachers also identified the ways in which school appears strange to the students, citing the fact that, in Israel

> *"the emphasis is on independence and on fostering personal responsibility,"*

implying that in the students' culture, these aspects do not exist or are not valued and must therefore be taught at school.

Coming late to class was seen as an example of behaviour that is the result of the students' cultural background. The fact that the students came late in the morning or after breaks was seen by the teachers as a lack of the skill of coming on time, due to lack of prior experience. They were not aware of its importance, and how lateness hinders their learning and their acquisition of work habits.

> *"Coming late is part of their culture; they waste time and are not aware of time";*

> *"they don't relate to time very well. They are used to going out to pasture with the herd in the morning and it doesn't matter what morning means – it can be 7:00 a.m., 8:00 a.m. or even 9:00 a.m. and they return at sunset – any time between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m."*

All attempts by the teachers to explain how important coming on time is in general and especially for effective learning are seen to be of no avail.

> *"Their timetable is different; they can make an appointment to meet me at 8:00 a.m. and come after 11:00 a.m. In response to my exasperation they will typically say: 'What do you want from me? I came to see you, didn't I!? I am here now.'"*

In informal conversations recorded in the field notes, students offer a different explanation for being late:

> *"I don't like to come to class because it does not interest me; it's the same thing over and over again."*

This lack of interest in the lessons could also explain their frequent tardiness, and lack of motivation.

Effects of the teachers' perceptions

The five teachers let factors such as the students' past performance, family background and beliefs about Ethiopian culture interfere with their willingness even to attempt to deal with the students' learning and adjustment problems. As one teacher stated:

> *"The excuse that they are Ethiopians is often used, and no one tries to reach them. In this system (the religious boarding school system) no emphasis is placed on general knowledge and there is no willingness to invest efforts in the students' advancement. And for the teachers it is very difficult to change, because for years we had a different population and now for the past seven years we have had to deal only with the Ethiopians, so it is not easy to change."*

An analysis of my field notes, of chance verbal exchanges and classroom observations supported for this view. Teachers' comments include statements describing students as being quiet, unmotivated and not caring about school:

> *"We can't give them pens and pencils or books to take to their room, because we would never see them again."*
>
> *"When I do give them pencils they break them."*
>
> *"They will only do their work in class if we insist, and if it does not require a great effort on their part. If they miss a lesson they will never make it up or ask for help; I often feel as if they are doing me a favour by attending class."*

While much of the students' prior experience inevitably impinged on their present predicament in the Israeli school, it would appear that the teachers' attitudes aggravated the existing situation. The implementers of the intervention programme attributed the students' difficulties to school factors rather than to home and cultural background.

> *"Whenever I was at the school I never saw an attempt made by the school to instil any rules or try to teach them (the Ethiopian students) something that would interest them. The teachers control them through compulsion, and if the teacher threatens them, they do what he wants."*

The implication here is that whilst the teachers attribute students' behaviour to cultural differences, they do not make any attempt to explain their expectations to

the students nor ease them into the new culture patiently. Their treatment of the problem could be counterproductive.

6.2.2 Teachers' Perceptions of the Students' Current Performance

Data for the 'present time dimension' were derived from the interviews conducted with the teachers. Implementers' comments, field notes and informal conversations with teachers were used to support or contradict the teachers perceptions. Most of the attitudes and behaviours described by the teachers were negative (see Table 6.4). This may be less surprising, however, when one remembers that the interviews focused on why the Ethiopian students were having difficulties and what affected their learning in this particular school. The categorisation of the various points made by the teachers proved difficult and resulted in inevitable overlap; however, it facilitated the creation of an overview of the teachers' perceptions.

Table 6.4: Teachers' perceptions of the students' current performance

Teachers' Perceptions	Number of statements	%	Examples
Lack of motivation; lack of self-reliance	62	43.7	*Must be told what to do next, need to be told what to do at all times. Do not initiate, only perform if they are told to do so.*
Cognitive styles and strategies	32	22.5	*Don't know how to study, not curious, they like to listen rather than do things in class.*
Classroom behaviour	24	16.9	*Walk in and out of the classroom. Come to class late and without books.*
Lack of learning skills	14	9.8	*Do not answer written questions; they wait for me to dictate the answer, or to write the answer on the board to be copied.*
Curriculum	10	7.0	*Computers are like toys.* *Why teach a foreign language (English), if they don't know Hebrew.*

Total number of statements referring to students' current performance = 142

Lack of motivation; lack of self-reliance

The teachers identified lack of motivation and of self-reliance as the chief obstacles to students' learning; 43.7% of their comments referred to these issues. The

teachers described the students as being focused on the 'here and now' and having difficulty in setting both short- and long-term goals:

> *"It's hard to motivate them; they have no motivation. Their concentration span is poor, and they walk in and out of class; they find it hard to focus and school does not interest them."*

The teachers provided some examples of behaviours they felt demonstrated a lack of motivation:

> *"They don't take responsibility for their work."*
> *"They don't care for their books and pencils."*
> *"They go in and out of class as they please."*
> *"They can't stay in class for an entire session".*
> *"They work only if provided with immediate gratification."*
> *"They are not used to working."*
> *"It's very hard to motivate them, they are like puppets, and we need to push them all the time."*

One teacher preferred to attribute lack of motivation to lack of work ethics:

> *"They never come prepared for anything, not even a test. For example, we give them the date of the test, and even if it is well in advance, they don't prepare and sometimes don't even come. They just don't care."*

The teachers see the students come to class without their basic equipment and consider this to be evidence of their lack of interest in school. This also means that the students cannot do the work unless the teacher provides them with pencils and paper. When students were provided with pencils they soon lost them, frustrating the teachers and fostering an attitude impeding their progress. According to one teacher:

> *"I have to tell them everything. They don't know how to get organized, they don't plan ahead."*

Contrary to the teachers the implementers pointed out that providing the students with equipment actually fosters and reinforces dependency.

The teachers related the students' lack of independence to almost every aspect of school life: not taking responsibility for their own behaviour or belongings, and not getting organised to meet their obligations, including completing assignments.

> *"They don't take responsibility for anything, they come to class as if they have just got out of bed, without pencils to write with or notebooks to write in. I informed them of the test date several times to make sure that they knew, but they*

still did not study and arrived unprepared, some did not even show up."

Although this was given as an example of the students' lack of responsibility, it also points to the teachers' sense of lack of control. The following conversation I had with the school secretary may suggest that this reflects the school's attitude to the Ethiopian immigrants and that the views held by the teachers were adopted by other school staff. For example, when I asked the school secretary for the students' school records, she asked "why" I replied that I was interested in seeing the reasons they were recommended for this school, and her reply was: "Well, isn't it obvious?" implying that they were in this school because they could not learn and were not into learning and are personally responsible.

Cognitive styles and strategies

The term 'cognitive styles' refers to the ways in which one acquires, processes, analyses and displays knowledge (Dunn and Griggs, 1990). An analysis of the data showed that when referring to cognitive aspects of learning, the teachers considered the students' difficulties as being a cultural problem. The teachers blamed students' cultural background as being a barrier to learning:

"They like to listen to stories, I think they enjoy listening even if the stories are about places and things which are not familiar to them, I can see that they like it!"

"They like Bible lessons because they like to listen to the stories, and the subject is taught through story telling."

"They especially like stories about Jewish ancient history, maybe because it is familiar or because this is what they studied in the villages in Ethiopia."

The teachers appeared to believe that students have a different cognitive style of learning; for instance, they absorb knowledge through listening rather than by actively participating in class or learning on their own from books. This causes difficulties within the Israeli educational system, where learning is perceived as requiring the learners' active participation. Teachers seemed to ignore the possibility that many of the difficulties culturally different students face stem from the incongruence between their previous learning experience and the demands of the

new formal educational system. As a result, these students may have difficulties within the traditional Israeli educational system, which emphasises competition and relies on individualised work. As one teacher mentioned:

> *"We want them to sit down and learn and they don't understand what it is we want, they do not do any task independently."*
>
> *"No one taught them how to function independently."*
>
> *"We want them to learn, but they don't understand what it is we want from them."*

One of the implementers gave the following example:

> *"It is very difficult for them to learn the way they are taught in the school, you can't teach them like you teach other Israeli students, because they seem to learn differently. I tried to learn from them what interests them and how they cope with or try to solve problems they encounter. Here everything is new to them, it is like being slightly disabled."*

She maintained that the intervention model might be viewed as crutches to support learning. The implementers suggested that in order to enable students to learn, the teachers must engage them in learning in an active way using relevant problems and group interaction, and that the teacher should not only be the transmitter of knowledge but rather a guide who facilitates learning. This is also in line with the intervention model and with the constructivist approach (see Chapter 3), which proposes that learners build their knowledge on what they already know, asserting that learning is active rather than passive.

However, the teachers also pointed out their own lack of skills and knowledge of appropriate methods, and proposed that new teaching skills should be taught to teachers to help them prepare the students to integrate more effectively into Israeli society. One teacher explained her strategy:

> *"I only ask simple questions, and I almost have to tell them the answer. You need to tell them what to do and almost what to answer. They do not come prepared to engage in learning."*

This suggests that the teacher did not realize that she could, and should, challenge the students by gradually introducing more demanding questions and leading them to ask questions. This was confirmed during my observation as I noticed that the students hardly ever asked questions nor did the teachers encourage them to do so.

Classroom behaviour

From the statements in this category it immediately became apparent that most of the behaviours described by the teachers were negative. The students were described as avoiding their classes and did not investing any effort into their studies. The teachers reported:

> *"Even though the class period is short, they usually get up and leave the class in the middle of the lesson."*
>
> *"Many of them fall asleep during the lesson, while the teacher is teaching."*
>
> *"They sleep during class and are not focused. They never say even to themselves that maybe I should listen."*
> *"They come totally unprepared for class, without pencils or books. I think they say to themselves that they can get one (a book) from someone else. I say to myself that it's a pity to give them books, because they never return them."*

The above statements reflect a misunderstanding of students' behaviour and point to the students' lack of interest in and alienation from the schooling process. The impression is that the teachers have pre-conceived ideas about the students, that they have very low expectations of them. Research (Obiakor, 1999; Gay, 1997) indicates that teachers' misunderstanding of and reactions to the behaviour of culturally different students can lead to school failure.

Curriculum

The teachers could not see the point of teaching subjects they felt were irrelevant to their students even though they were required by the school curriculum. They suggested that the subject matter should be adapted to their immediate needs:

"They have difficulties with the language and with math, so they just copy from the board and don't practice enough."

"We teach them computers and they like working with the computer, but they just press the keys and they don't understand what it is they are doing. It is more like a toy."

"Why are they forced to do some 'bagrut' (final exams) studies? They do only one unit (out of the minimum of 3 required), so how is one unit going to help them in future? It may help the school statistics, but we need to teach them things that will help them now, and that they will be able to use in future – I mean work skills or a trade."

"We teach them English. Why do they need English? Will this help them integrate into society? Or get a job? They don't know how to hold a pencil and we are expected to teach them English, which they don't even like."

The teachers are obviously frustrated, yet they can't seem to grasp how frustrated the students must be.

6.2.3 Prospects for the Future as Perceived by the Teachers

So far focus has been on the past (which might be described, using Bordieu's terms, as the students' cultural capital) and present (habitus and field) time dimensions; what about the future? How do the two above aspects influence the future of the Ethiopian immigrants?

As the data emerged, it became clear that the teachers do not consider the students capable of succeeding in the future. Table 6.5 presents the way the teachers' beliefs were reflected in their comments.

Table 6.5: Prospects for the future

Teachers' perceptions	**Number of statements**	**%**	**Examples**
The system has given up	21	60	*No one really expects them to do well; the fact that they were referred to this school indicates that other schools have given up on them.*
Lack of belief in their future achievements	14	40	*It is difficult for me to be optimistic, we can't fix years of deprivation.*

Total number of statements referring to prospects for the future = 35

The teachers' statements were divided into the above two categories and echoed those expressed by other teachers in the school during observations and informal conversations. The small number of statements regarding the prospects for the future suggests that the teachers' expectations are influenced by their perceptions of the students' background and current problems, and seemed to reflect a certain apathy, which affected their predictions.

The system has given up

The teachers made predictions about their students very early on (their first year in this school). When asked to tell me her expectations of the students during an informal conversation, one teacher said:

> *"We don't have any expectations of them. As you see they are very difficult to teach. The fact that they have been sent to this boarding school indicates that they also had problems in the other schools they attended and that the system (schools) has just given up on them. For them this is the last stop and from here it is the street."*

Teachers apparently just do not have the will to invest in the students. One of the implementers agreed that it is difficult to predict a bright future for them, offering the following explanation for this problem:

> *"It is difficult for them, because no one ever demanded anything of them, no effort was put into teaching them, and now they don't expect anything of them, the whole school system..."*

The above situation suggests that although multicultural education is a national goal of the state of Israel (Goldring, 1992), there is little evidence of true commitment to this goal by the school administration and the teachers in this study.

Lack of belief in the students' future achievements

The teachers' predictions were clearly pessimistic:

> *"I would like to be optimistic and say that it is worthwhile investing in these students, but I can't. How can one teach this way?"*

They do not believe that the students are capable of becoming productive members of society:

> *"Everyone has given up. Whatever we do here will not help"*
>
> *"Some of the students are encouraged to study towards the matriculation exams, but I know they will not do well, the low grades they will receive will not help them have a better future."*
>
> *"We actually do not teach anything that I can say will help them in future."*
>
> *"I really don't believe that they are able to accomplish anything, nothing will become of them; but they are young and at this point we have to provide them with an educational setting."*

During informal conversations with two students, I asked them how they see themselves in the near future after they leave school; this is what they replied:

> *"I want to get a job and make money."*

When I asked how they would do this, they replied that they did not know. They realised that they would have to work in order to make a living, but understood that they lacked the skills and knowledge to do so, and obviously didn't know how to go about it.

The implementers also felt that the students had low expectations of what they could achieve:

> *"They often don't pay attention because they feel that they have 'no future.' One student said to me – 'this school is for Ethiopians; it is for those who have no future.' Although they don't say this often, it is a clear indication of how they feel – that they will not profit from attending school."*

6.2.4 Teachers' Perceptions of their Own Difficulties in Fulfilling their Role

Another theme that emerged was the way teachers perceive their role in the school. They felt their lack of the teaching skills required to teach Ethiopian immigrant students, and the lack of support and caring on the part of the school administration. The school conveyed ambiguous messages about their roles.

Table 6.6 illustrates these aspects and highlights the importance ascribed to them by the teachers:

Table 6.6: Teachers' perceptions of their difficulties in fulfilling their role

Teachers' perceptions	**Number of statements**	**%**	**Examples**
Sense of helplessness; lack of support	19	41.3	*The administration considers supervisors more important than the teachers.*
Teachers' lack of skills	6	13.0	*How am I supposed to deal with lack of motivation? We mainly improvise. I find that I can't deal with lateness.*
Administration's attitude to the teachers	12	26.1	*Teachers are blamed for student misbehaviour.*
Administration's treatment of the students and ambiguous messages	9	19.5	*Student punishment is inconsistent. If a student is late for class, nothing is said, but if he is late for morning prayer his allowance will be reduced.*

Total number of statements referring to teachers' perceptions of their difficulties in fulfilling their role = 46

In the above table the first two factors are personal and relate to the teachers' perceptions of their lack of skills and their sense of helplessness. The two additional ones refer to the school context, focusing on the messages conveyed by the school's institutional structure and how the teachers are affected by them.

Personal factors

From the interviews, the teachers generally revealed pre-determined attitudes towards the students and a sense of helplessness in facing their task, while perceiving the school context as being non-supportive, indifferent and even inhibiting. Although the teachers understood the importance of providing immigrant students with an education to help them integrate into society, they pointed out that they lacked the necessary know-how:

> *"We lack the tools and skills to cope with this population. I worked differently for years because the school population was different. It is difficult because they are adolescents with*

all the problems of adolescence. The staff was not always trained to work with this population. It is not until you work with them that you realize that you can't understand them. When I came across a problem like some students cursing me, I did not know what to do, so I responded emotionally."

Another teacher added:

"I feel that my work is a never-ending struggle. During the last two years I have not been able to reach the students, except for maybe one or two."

One of the greatest frustrations for teachers is when they feel that, after investing considerable time and effort, they do not see any improvement:

"The teachers concentrate on surviving the day, that is why they don't invest in the students. We survive because some of us have developed a special sense of humour (cynical) and we support each other."

Another teacher added:

"At the end of the day I feel exhausted, I just wait for it to be over."

One teacher described how she copes:

"I come to school every morning, but in order to survive the day I have developed an 'elephant's skin'... We have students in class who really do not belong here because they have enormous gaps to close. Since we do not have any support, we lean on our colleagues and we support each other."

The teachers feel that they have not accomplished anything and are making no impact. Table 6.7 provides additional evidence of the teachers' predicament, showing the recurrence of particular metaphors.

Table 6.7: Statements describing teachers' feelings about their job

Teachers' Feelings	**Recurrence**	**%**	**Examples**
Coping under "warlike" conditions	9	45	*Upon arrival at work I feel that I am on a battlefield.*
Ways of "survival"	11	55	*We have a special sense of humour; we support each other; that's how we survive the day.*

Total number of statements referring to teachers' feelings about their job = 20

Although the teachers did not often mention directly how they were affected by their work, this cannot be overlooked since their statements about their feelings are very powerful. They suggest that the teachers feel isolated, unmotivated and unable to fight what is perceived to be an impossible situation. The literature (Purky, 1970) mentions that teachers need to feel successful and good about themselves and their abilities before they can empower their students to feel the same way. If teachers experience feelings of failure and/or are deprived of personal satisfaction, their relationship with students and the school will ultimately suffer (Jeans, 1992).

School context

The teachers perceived the school context as being non-supportive, indifferent and inhibiting. The head-teacher had been in this position for over 15 years and had worked in schools for over 20 years (the year of the intervention programme was his last year in office before retiring). Of the five teachers interviewed, four did not consider the head-teacher to have sound leadership skills. The following are several comments made about the school head-teacher and administration.

> *"The system is inefficient."*
>
> *"Throughout the six months I was at the school I did not see any attempt by the school to formulate general rules or create motivation, which is to be expected from the school. The head teacher only wants peace and quiet."*

During my observations, and after reviewing my field notes, I found it was not uncommon to hear the administrative staff say things such as *"that's the way these kids are."* This no doubt reinforced the teachers' feelings of helplessness.

Teachers complained about the total lack of support:

> *"The teachers support each other, because there is no one to support us."*
>
> *"The head-teacher is more concerned about what the supervisors will say and what they think of him than about us in school."*
>
> *"The head-teacher expects to have very few problems and is more concerned about the impression the school makes on outsiders than on supporting teachers."*

"As far as he is concerned, if the doors are closed then learning is taking place."

The teachers feel that they are left completely to their own devices.

6.2.5 Teachers' Perceptions of the Students' Needs

Question 3: What are the teachers' perceptions regarding the unique needs of Ethiopian immigrants that will lead to students' empowerment and help reduce cultural gaps in school and society?

What needs to be done to empower Ethiopian immigrant students and enable them to benefit from the school system and function successfully within Israeli society? Despite the complexity of the situation the data suggest that teachers know what needs to be done, but the issue needs to be approached thoughtfully and comprehensively. In the interviews and informal conversations, the teachers made some valuable suggestions, as summarised in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8: Teachers' and implementers' perceptions of the students'needs

Educational	Study skills	16	12.4	*Teach how to prepare for a test, or how to organise the things they have learned.*
	Exposure to and experience with technology	3	2.3	*Teach computers and what can be done with this skill, not just play games.*
	Providing interest and variety	12	9.3	*Incorporate things such as music into the lesson.*
Social	Raising expectations	11	8.5	*Tell them what you expect of them and how it can be done. Encourage them to finish assignments.*
	Following personal examples; need for role models	6	4.6	*The teacher should come on time.* *We don't have any Ethiopian people on staff here"*
	Preparation for adult life; life skills	32	24.8	*How to look for a job in the newspaper, choose among options, make decisions.*
	Relevant practice/experience	14	10.9	*Teach subjects relevant to their experiences, practice new skills while they are still in school.*
Emotional	Adopting different values	6	4.6	*Help them think of school as a place where they can make progress, not as a punishment.*
	Positive experiences	8	6.2	*Give assignments they can do well in.*
	Self-acceptance and a positive self-image	12	9.3	*Show them that they can do well, to like themselves more.*
	Reducing frustration and sense of failure	9	7.0	*Invest more time in things they like to do like music. Give short assignments to reduce frustration.*

Total number of statements referring to needs to be met for integration into society = 129

6.3 Empowerment of Ethiopian Immigrant Students: Teachers' Perceptions

6.3.1 Educational needs

The teachers realised that their teaching should also include a variety of activities other than focusing on content-centred learning. Some teachers emphasised that the gaps in knowledge need to be bridged:

> *"In Grade 9 they have to learn certain subjects as preparation for their matriculation exams. One can choose the topics within the chosen subject, perhaps reduce the level of difficulty to lower frustration, but one should not abandon the academic subject matter."*

The teachers felt that the students needed to be taught how to study, manage time and prepare for exams in an organised and systematic way. One implementer emphasised:

> *"It is not so important to teach them some more topics in literature or history. It is very important to teach them how to learn and enrich their learning. For them to succeed in their studies and later on in life, we need to teach them how to plan and differentiate (choose) between the main issues and the minor ones – a skill they lack and which they have never been taught here, because this is a religious school and most of the time is spent on religious content."*

When a teacher was asked what she thought was important for her students, she said:

> *"To teach them how to learn, to take responsibility, we don't have a time schedule which enables us to teach this directly, but it should be part of every lesson, at school and in the after-school programmes. They should be given more things to do independently. They lack general knowledge, but in religious schools general knowledge is not considered to be so important."*

This view is strongly reflected in a message sent by the school librarian to the teachers:

> *"Dear teachers, please give the pupils assignments that encourage them to look into encyclopaedias and dictionaries for homework. Any subject learned in class can also serve as*

practice in the use of reference books. Please note! They (the students) don't know how to do this and it's a pity!!!"

Some teachers emphasize that the teaching of basic skills should be the main concern. The need to provide interest and variety was mentioned by many teachers, but few were able to do so. The implementers and the students mentioned that lessons should be fun. One of the implementers said:

> *"I would have liked to incorporate more music and drama in the lessons, I would have liked to learn from the students what they like. The fact that my approach was different contributed a lot to the students. I saw things differently and related differently to them and they felt this. Don't think they did not try to test me; for example, they asked me why I don't record or report everyone who leaves the lesson without permission. I told them that I trusted them to come back from the toilets immediately they finished – and in fact, after a number of times, they saw that I didn't run to the head teacher to report those not present in class and that I was telling the truth. They then made sure to come to class and participate. This is a dynamic that one develops over a period of time."*

The teachers agree that students find it difficult to learn when they are unable to relate to what is being taught to their everyday life experiences. An implementer reported that her work was successful when she became aware of the need to provide a meaningful context in a variety of ways:

> *"Each lesson I changed the type of work they were doing and the way they were working. For example, one day I videotaped the lesson and showed it to them. I also presented them with dilemmas arising from my own and my children's experiences and asked them what they would have done. This interested them and encouraged them to take part, remain with the group and not leave the class."*

The implementer, being better prepared to teach the immigrant students, showed greater awareness of the students' needs in this respect.

6.3.2 Social Needs

The education children should receive should not only promote learning in the classroom but also serve their fundamental needs, preparing them to become fully integrated into society and provide opportunities in the social sphere, leading to social integration.

Most teachers focused on the practical knowledge required for preparation for adult life and transition to work.

> *"We need to teach them the practical skills they will need in future."*

Teachers mentioned several experiences that should take place while they are still in school, so that the problems they are likely to encounter could be resolved in class. For example, how to prepare for a job interview:

> *"We must teach them practical skills.... Perhaps towards the end of the 12th grade we should slowly transfer them into a work framework, so that they can prepare themselves for work and we can help them deal with work problems as they come up."*

These responses were also typical of comments made by the school staff during informal conversations.

> *"The most important thing they [the Ethiopian students] need to learn and that we must teach them is preparation for life. For example, writing a resume, and presenting yourself in an interview and other skills needed as preparation for life.*

Other areas of practical knowledge included opening a bank account and job-hunting. Not all teachers have the skills or knowledge to teach these subjects and some don't want to teach them at all.

The teachers also spoke about autonomy and self-determination skills:

> *"The school does not prepare them well enough for life. Technical learning – learning subjects by rote – is not good enough. The students need to be taught how to look for a job in the newspaper, how to work with a bank. Rote learning cannot educate towards autonomy. They will always need to be told what to do... What's important is preparation for life, how to be independent, how to believe in themselves. If they could choose something that interested them, they might*

become enthusiastic and they would want to do more things. They shouldn't be told what to do, but they have to decide what to do."

Four teachers and the implementers deemed teaching students to set their own goals as being a necessary skill to be learned.

"They need to be made to feel responsible for their studies."

Another teacher emphasised:

"They should be taught to be independent, to decide for themselves, to make independent choices, and to seek out things that interest them."

The teachers also emphasised that they lacked the skills and knowledge to teach these skills:

"Staff that has not been trained to work with this population lacks the tools to deal with such students."

An interesting issue brought up by the implementers was the need for role models, provided by Ethiopian immigrants.

"If I was head of the school I would have hired more Ethiopian teachers because the majority of role models that students see are in the fields of sport and music. It is rare for them to see a young Ethiopian in the teaching profession".

"In the specific school, for example, there are no Ethiopian teachers or other Ethiopian educational staff. The school has not made any real attempt to address this within the school itself".

The implementers recognised this need and offered alternatives, for example the need for various types of role models. They mentioned a shortage of role models in achievement-related areas, as was the case in the other schools they attended prior to arriving at this school.

6.3.3 Emotional Needs

The teachers feel they must provide a safe atmosphere in order to satisfy the emotional needs of Ethiopian students and enable them to make adjustments and provide experiences to enhance their self-esteem by learning new skills. Most

students were thought to lack self-esteem and confidence due to language difficulties and family background. The teachers suggested strategies they felt could build self-esteem.

> *"We have to keep working on self-esteem, so that they feel that someone believes in them and thinks well of them."*
> *In particular they mentioned rewards:*
>
> *"They like to be rewarded, and they will work for candy."*

An implementer added:

> *"I gave them constant praise; their self confidence doesn't last five minutes unless it is constantly reinforced."*

A teacher's belief in the students and making them feel special and important significantly affects how they feel about that teacher, the subject and even their achievements in the subject. One of the implementers said:

> *"They feel they gained nothing from their experiences in school. They don't actually verbalize this, but this is the message passed on by their teachers. This can be conveyed without words and they sense the teachers' lack of motivation. I think that if the teacher's message were that it is worthwhile to invest in them, then, perhaps, they would also try harder."*

The implementer then describes a situation that illustrates what she said:

> *"There were students in my group whose level of knowledge was very low, but they came to class willingly and didn't miss a lesson, since they were given positive feedback and also saw that I cared and invested a lot in them. Perhaps the school should adopt this approach, because the students find it hard to function the way things are."*

Anxiety, frustration and failure have become part of the students' school experience, often existing before they arrived at the present school; these feelings of failure were reinforced by the reputation of the schools and communities they come from and heightened by their transfer to this particular school. Experience of failure impedes motivation. During observation, I witnessed a teacher returning tests. One of the students seemed extremely disappointed by the result:

"I studied for this science test and I failed."

Observer: "How did you prepare for the test?"
Student: "I studied with a friend, but the test was harder than I expected."
Observer: "I see that you are very disappointed."
Student: "I don't care anymore. I was not given enough time to prepare for this test; it's the same thing every time (referring to the fact that he attempts to study and fails repeatedly).

Another student joined in the conversation and added:

"This will not happen to me" (meaning the student's disappointment). I just don't take any tests."
Observer: "What do you find difficult?"
Student: "I don't know. I am stupid."

Disappointment with school and feeling ashamed of the school's reputation reinforces the students' perception as being incapable of progress. For them to make an effort to learn, they must believe that they are capable of achieving success. The teachers and implementers agreed that negative responses to students are not effective. The data suggest that the teachers do not have the skills to be assertive in their demands, without creating an unpleasant atmosphere. When the teachers were asked how they deal with behavioural problems, they answered:

"Sometimes we talk with the students, but it does not always help. Sometimes we call the head-teacher and he shouts at them and then they calm down. The educational system perhaps has to adopt behaviour management techniques such as behaviour modification through a system of rewards and punishments. They should not be allowed to go to their dormitories, which should be locked during the day, because the students run away from class and go to their rooms. We need to be authoritarian."

However, the three teachers took the caring, understanding approach and made comments such as these that I heard during my observation:

Student: "I don't want to stay in class."
Teacher: "You know you can't leave the classroom."
Student: "You can't keep me here." (Stands up and walks out.)
Teacher (turns to me and whispers): "I can't be angry with him, I feel very sorry for him; you must understand, his father recently died from a drug overdose."

CHAPTER 7: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Previous research on teaching self-determination skills has shown it to be effective with a wide variety of students who are difficult to teach. The current study was intended to extend that research by applying a model, designed to teach self-determination skills to children with physical or learning disabilities, to Ethiopian immigrant children in Israel. The research questions and the methods of data collection made it possible to examine an intervention programme (Reiter's Model) that had not been used in previous studies of immigrant education and self-determination skills.

Research in the area of immigrant education (Igoa, 1995; McDonnell & Hill, 1993) has focused on three major types of studies. One group of studies focused on immigrant children's adjustment problems related to the need to learn a new language and function in a new culture, along with possible disruptions of family life (Suarez Orozco, 1993). Another type of study highlighted the accomplishments of immigrant youths in schools. The findings indicate that family support, hard work, and the family ascribing high values to education are important factors contributing to immigrants' success in school (Caplan et al.,1989; Gibson 1988). The last group of studies described the pervasive nature of the differential educational achievements across all ethnic groups (Erickson 1987; Ogbu, 1990). Yet in focusing on the above factors, these studies ignore the complexity of the process, during which immigrants endure hardships and drastic cultural upheavals, and they do not deal with the abilities and skills necessary to adjust in order to become autonomous and successful in a new society.

A thorough study of the situation of the Ethiopian community in Israel (chapterl) and of the way the local education system has attempted to absorb the young immigrants (chapter 2), as well as my own extensive experience in teaching and guiding teachers, led me to formulate the aims of the study (chapter 4), taking into account the theoretical aspects related to the problems highlighted (chapter 3). The intervention programme was chosen since it appeared that it might answer the basic needs of the Ethiopian students.

The three questions posed reflected my desire not merely to evaluate a specific programme by quantification of its effects, but to arrive at an in-depth analysis of the situation by means of qualitative research, using the case study

method. I hoped that the insights gained would enable me to draw conclusions that would assist in improving the situation. In view of the statistically insignificant results of the pre- and post-tests, the investigation carried out through interviews with the teachers and implementers, and my observation diary and informal conversations held with various staff members and students became exceedingly important. An analysis of the qualitative data enabled me to explore these findings and suggest why the intervention had such a minor effect.

I turned to the teachers, since I felt that their being in daily contact with the students and knowing them within the school setting would enable them to shed some light on the results. I also interviewed the implementers, talked to other staff, observed lessons and used various school documents. Strauss and Corbin (1990) claim that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. In this case, the quantitative results are not sufficient to describe or interpret the situation adequately. The ability of qualitative data to more fully describe a phenomenon was an important consideration when planning the study.

7.1 Teachers' Perceptions of How the Students' Past Affects their Performance (see 6.2.1)

From the findings regarding the teachers' perceptions of how the students' *prior learning experience* affects their performance, we can see that they consider it one of the main causes of the students' current problems. Jussim et al. (1998) agree and point out that "by far the strongest influences on teaching are usually the students' past performances and motivation" (p. 27). However, the question arises whether focusing on the students' past achievements does not also affect the expectations of the teachers. Baron et al. (1985) claim that the effects of these expectations are cyclical and a student who has performed poorly in the past is expected to perform poorly in the future, just as a student who has performed well in the past is expected to perform well in future. Other factors are prior knowledge, seen by teachers as a determinant of the students' poor performance in class, and their adjustment, which is dependent on the level of their skills at entry (basic academic knowledge such as language and mathematics) and their experience in school (study skills). In general, teachers who view students' abilities, prior experiences, knowledge

and home environment as important determinants of academic success may develop low expectations of their students and even of themselves (Bar-Tal and Guttman, 1981). This is supported by evidence provided by Eggleston (1993) in the UK, where black children were kept in lower-level groups in several schools (Eggleston et al., 1986). When teachers were asked about the reasons for this, expectations and assumptions surfaced that black children lacked the persistence, ambition and endurance to "make it" academically, justifying the pedagogical strategy of assigning them to lower-achieving groups. The above-mentioned studies appear very pertinent to the attitude of the teachers in this study, who appear to assume that the gaps in the students' education cannot be bridged at this stage. In this study however the teachers not only viewed their students as being quite limited in their learning ability but also did not see themselves as responsible for finding ways to raise those students' academic and social performance. Low achievement and passivity were attributed to student characteristics- Ethiopian and prior knowledge, rather than to the school's managerial and/or instructional practices.

The students' *family background*, though less often mentioned by the teachers than their prior learning experience, certainly affected the teachers' expectations, although they appear to have had little contact with the students' families. Baron et al. (1985) compiled 11 studies on teacher expectations based on socio-economic class and found teachers' expectations of middle-class students to be higher than those of lower-class students. Burns et al. (2000) showed that teachers tend to have higher expectations of certain types of students than they do of others: students who have been high performers in the past are white and middle-class. The effect of these expectations may have profound implications on what students actually learn. Baksh (1984) adds that such phenomena affect student motivation. This suggests why teachers of these Ethiopian students consider them passive and unmotivated.

Horowitz et al. (1997) studied the adjustment of Ethiopian immigrants to Israel and expressed the following view:

> *"The centrality of traditional family values in the life of the Ethiopian child has often puzzled Western observers."*

In this study I am suggesting that the lack of understanding of the Ethiopian family contributes to the formation of expectations.

According to Horowitz et al. (1997) a considerable number of Ethiopian families arriving in Israel should be labelled as broken families, irrespective of whether the families split up out of choice or against their will. Moreover, the family is not always a conventional family in the Western sense. Sometimes it consists of children and 'sociological' fathers rather than biological fathers. The phenomenon of adults taking on responsibility for the education of the younger generation, without any biological connection, is well known in African tribal societies. The teachers were aware of such possible differences between conventional families and those of their students, and ascribed current difficulties to the students' family background.

The teachers in this study felt that the needs of Ethiopian students were more serious than simply a lack of previous curriculum-related knowledge. They mentioned that some of the students may be suffering from *undetected learning disabilities*. Feuerstein et al. (1980, 1991) agree but make an important distinction between differences in cognitive style, caused by cultural distance (cultural difference) and those caused by the individual's deprivation of his or her own culture. Feuerstein (2001) further suggests that this view should be approached with great caution since an important question that has been raised recently regarding new Ethiopian immigrants to Israel is how to assess their learning potential, especially in view of the inadequacy of standard testing of immigrants and especially Ethiopian immigrants in Israel. This inadequacy applies not only to Ethiopian immigrants, but also to a variety of other populations living for socio-historical reasons as subcultures within Israel's diverse cultural web, possibly also suffering as a result of inadequate diagnostic procedures.

Certain studies (Tzuriel, 1996, 1997; Tzuriel et al., 1999) claim that the difficulties reported by teachers stem from the 'static' element in their evaluation. Vygotsky argued that interpreting static results (e.g. IQ) as a reflection of the student's ability is misleading, because in reality the student's performance reflects his/her entire socio-educational history and the static results of only one type of test cannot do it justice. The danger associated with this type of interpretation is that it may lead to the phenomenon known as self-fulfilling prophecy. Ethiopian immigrant students apparently suffered from the authorities' inability to differentiate between their manifested level of functioning and their true potential for change. As a result of their scores on standard tests (IQ), they were usually placed in substandard

frameworks or in classes offering lower educational challenges, such as low-level vocational training or, in the worst case, in special education settings.

When students cannot make sense of the content taught in the classroom, teachers tend to refer them to special education classes (Chavez and O'Donnell, 1998). Lewis and Doorlang (1991) found in their studies that teachers often misinterpreted abilities of culturally different students because of their foreign accent in English and they were quiet in the classroom. In Israel this occurs frequently among Ethiopian students (Feuerstein, 2001), who are labelled by the school staff as having learning disabilities. The culturally different students find themselves in a disadvantaged position, as Feuerstein (2001) has shown (cited in the JDC Brookdale Institute paper):

> *"The condition of the immigrant Ethiopian population is characterized by the fact that in terms of cultural difference, their culture is very distant from the modern Israeli culture to which they had to adapt. This cultural difference is reciprocal, in the sense that representatives of the dominant Israeli culture do not usually have the adequate knowledge to understand the immigrants' way of thinking, their concepts, vocabulary, and levels of understanding which are so different and so strange to those who must integrate them into the educational system."*

Cummins (1986) does not deny that cultural minority students may also have learning disabilities but claims that this is because the school 'disempowers' them. He concludes that educators and policymakers

> *"must redefine their roles within the classroom, the community, and the broader society, so that these role definitions result in interactions that empower rather than disable students"(p. 33).*

In fact, the problems that the teachers had to cope with constantly in this study, such as the students' disregard of the time factor, were ascribed to their *cultural background.* Bourdieu argues that school is structured to benefit children who belong to a higher social stratum. From this perspective, the school system is seen as an integral part of a cultural system that values and promotes cultural knowledge and cognitive skills, characteristic of higher status families. The children of these families were born into the culture of the schools they enter; the Ethiopian

children, however, are immigrants, newcomers and outsiders, and considered to be of lower status, having experienced school in a "foreign land." Because of the absorption policies imposed on them, they are also perceived as such by the native Israeli teachers. Bourdieu attributes students' learning and adjustment difficulties to their cultural background and suggests that family status affects the schools' assessment of students over and above the possible predictions resulting from testing their academic achievements. In this study this seems to be the case.

Feuerstein's (1991) 'cultural difference' approach assumes that there is a difference between the culture of the home and the school, and as a result, students experience a cultural conflict and have trouble negotiating between the two. Feuerstein's view, similar to that of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) but more optimistic, is expressed via the more neutral, non-judgmental terms 'cultural difference,' rather than 'disadvantaged students,' to describe the disparity between home and school. Immigrant students are inevitably at some disadvantage when they go to school, but this disadvantage is not something inherent; it is transitional. Students are relatively disadvantaged because of the ways in which education is provided. Both Feuerstein and Bourdieu acknowledge that different skills and approaches are needed for different environments. The strength of Feuerstein's approach as opposed to Bourdieu's 'cultural capital' approach is that there is no hierarchical stance nor perception of ascendancy of one culture over another. It proposes that schools use the "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez et al., 1993) students bring with them to enhance the subject matter they study rather than having a curriculum imposed upon them. This approach does not ignore the fact that students bring their cultural capital to school with them, but proposes to use it as a starting point and basis to build on, rather than perceiving it as a hindrance to the immigrants' education. Erickson (1993) takes this idea beyond the approaches of both cultural difference and cultural capital and focuses neither on the individual nor on the school as a whole, but on the classroom as a dynamic environment serving the various needs of the students.

In this study, although the teachers claim that it is the students' cultural background that hinders their progress, causing their passive stance towards study, they did not attempt to seek a more creative solution; they continued to teach the school curriculum (even though they felt it to be inadequate) rather than identify and

develop the individual strengths and funds of knowledge that these new immigrants bring with them. The intervention was an attempt to break this cycle of imposing the general curriculum on the students and use the classroom as a place where changes may occur and influence their lives after they leave school. I suggest that the biggest challenge the school is facing is how to empower Ethiopian immigrant students with resourceful decision-making and goal-setting skills, and foster personal responsibility for life long learning, so they may develop their full potential. This is not an easy task especially when the students' culture is so different from the mainstream culture. In this case the teachers, in dealing with the challenge of educating immigrant students, implemented – consciously or unconsciously – the melting pot ideology. This might have contributed to the students' passivity.

When teachers focus on the students' history and culture and blame these aspects for their present performance, generalisations, stereotypes and myths about the other culture are generated. Educators of immigrant children must be aware of the danger of this process and not contribute to their perpetuation. Education will only improve when teachers stop blaming the language and culture of origin of the immigrant students, their parents and community, and take responsibility for the students' lack of success first in their own classroom and secondly in society.

Teachers in this study focus mainly on students' behaviour and assume that their behaviour needs to change before learning can take place. They ignore (except in a negative way) the fact that the Ethiopian immigrants arrive in Israel with different cultural habits or a different 'habitus,' and as a result need to learn new skills, to help them cope with the differences.

Much of the uncertainty about the abilities of immigrant students often stems from a teachers' general lack of awareness and sensitivity to the unique needs and problems of students from different backgrounds. In this case, when referring to the students' past, the teachers seem to disregard the fact that the Ethiopian students have a rich historical and cultural heritage (cultural capital) that helped generations upon generations to preserve their Jewish culture and identity. Only by acquiring an in-depth knowledge about the students' homes and their community can the teachers interpret their behaviour correctly and assess their abilities and potential.

Comber (1998) and Freebody et al. (1995) emphasise the danger of succumbing to explanations that regard the students' families and home life as

deficient in terms of parenting, educational experience and ways of life. They state that the ready acceptance of such explanations not only leads to reduced expectations of these students (whose poor performance can be conveniently blamed on their families and background) but ultimately to the closing of many potential avenues of achievement. From my study I would conclude that it may also contribute to their passivity by offering them limited or modified curricula and hence lower level learning experiences.

In a comparative study between Brazil and the UK, Canen (1995) cites Mello's study (1982), which shows how children from disadvantaged backgrounds were viewed by many teachers either under "the fatalistic light of victims of their own social and economic conditions" (p. 4) or as idle and less intellectually able, which would answer for their failure. For some time, the blame for the academic failure of Ethiopian immigrant children in Israel was placed on their culture. The question arises whether the 'melting pot' approach to immigrant absorption and to the education of immigrant children in Israel does not lead to a form of cultural reproduction of the mainstream culture. Teachers in this study, in their attempts to impose the school curriculum on the students without making any modifications or any attempt to impart additional skills, contribute to the reproduction of the mainstream culture. Therefore the quality of the education provided to the immigrant students in this school is poor and fails to give the students the necessary skills and competence to succeed in school and later on in the world of work. The reproductive cycle is thus completed.

The attempt to transmit the majority's cultural values throughout the school system with a view to the immigrants' successful integration is the tendency in most countries absorbing large numbers of immigrants, such as the USA, Australia and to a lesser extent Canada, where the concept of a 'cultural mosaic' rather than 'melting pot' has been propounded. This tendency may be inevitable, but if it is manifested without due consideration and respect for the cultural capital of the immigrants and without giving them the tools to enable them to exploit their potential within the new society, they may become marginalized with disastrous results, as recent developments in Israel have revealed. Paragraph 2 of the Law for State Education (1953) provides what is an attempt to include all the elements of a good education. The aim is:

> *"to ground state education in the values of Jewish culture and the achievements of science; to base it on love for the Motherland; on loyalty to the state and to the nation of Israel; on the practice of agriculture and crafts, on training for pioneering; and on the aspiration for a society built on freedom, equality, tolerance, mutual aid, and love of fellow men" (Elboim & Dror, 1980).*

The social integration of the students, the promotion of social relations between immigrants and native-born students, was considered of equal importance to language acquisition, and has become the major goal of the Ministry of Education in the 90s. The Ministry believes that there is a strong correlation between scholastic achievements and social absorption (Brandes, 1996). In spite of the legal equality and formal statements about egalitarianism in education, the inputs are quite different from those cited here. This makes the skills pointed out by the teachers extremely important, seeing that Ethiopian students were described as

> *"non-assertive and non-competitive, hence not well prepared to acquire their own independent status among their school mates" (Bodowsky et al., 1994).*

In Israel the Ethiopian students are expected to abandon "the old ways". The implementers suggested that students should not compromise their own cultural values; however, they do need to develop a clear understanding of Western values in order to make decisions and choices based on knowledge to ensure they are not at a disadvantage. Thus the task is indeed daunting.

7.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Current Performance (see 6.2.2)

In describing the students' current performance and learning problems, the teachers emphasized the students' *lack of motivation.* Valdez, (1996) agrees and supports previous studies that show that teachers often believe minority children are not motivated to engage in academic tasks. Martin (2000) and Hidi (1990) claim that motivation can be conceptualized as students' energy and drive to learn, work effectively and achieve so as to exploit their potential at school. It is the lack of interest in a subject or activity that often leads to a decrease in motivation. The lack of motivation in this case may be the result of the teachers' misunderstanding not only of the immigrants' culture, but also of how to connect to the students' cultural

background in order to increase their interest in learning and their motivation. The problem may stem not only from the immigrant students' attitude, but also from that of the teachers. Their misunderstanding of the immigrant students' behaviour and attitude and by not realizing how they themselves may be contributing to it, they accuse the students of being passive and unmotivated.

Currently prevalent theories of motivation conceptualize motivational processes as individual cognitive processes. A cognitive view of motivation presupposes a clear relationship between beliefs, attitudes and values as mediators of task engagement (Covington, 1998). One problem with this theory is pointed out by Monzo and Rueda (2001), who claim that it is based on mainstream notions of individual beliefs and goals, and neglects the cultural and historical forces that shape these beliefs and goals. A second problem is that cognitive theories see motivational processes as occurring inside the individual, excluding related socio-cultural factors. The socio-cultural approach emerging from the work of Vygotsky (1978) views learning and development as culturally, historically and socially mediated processes (Wertsch, 1994). Although this approach has often been used to explain learning and cognitive activity, a few researchers (Rueda & Dembo, 1995; Silvan, 1986) have begun to apply it to affective processes such as motivation. Since activity is socially mediated, motivation does not only take place in the mind of the individual, it is also the result of social interaction. Furthermore these interactions are shaped by the context in which they take place. From this perspective, motivation should be considered within the context, affecting behaviour.

Teachers generally consider stimulating their students' interest as one of their main tasks; when preparing their lessons they try to visualize the students' reactions both as to the content and to the methods they intend to implement. In this case the teachers seemed to have come to the foregone conclusion that lack of motivation was mainly due to the students' cultural background; only one teacher felt that the lessons should be made more interesting by introducing more variety. Another teacher did not realize that she could and should challenge the students by gradually introducing more demanding questions and leading them to ask questions. Consequently the students hardly ever asked questions nor did the teachers encourage them to do so. The teachers' methods were obviously counterproductive.

The Irish poet William B. Yeats wrote: "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." Paraphrasing him, I would like to suggest that in order to "spark motivation" within the Ethiopian immigrant students, teachers should understand their cultural heritage and determine which are the best ways to teach these students. The intervention program was certainly an attempt to spark a process that would enable the students to become more independent and autonomous decision-makers. For example, research has shown that choice can be a powerful motivator. Children who have been given opportunities to choose reading materials that they found interesting invest more effort learning and tend to understand the material better (Turner & Paris, 1995).

The teachers deplored the students' *lack of initiative and self-reliance*; they did not seem capable of working on their own. Studying alone did not come naturally to them, but could have been taught step by step. Feuerstein et al. (1980, 1991) make an important distinction between differences in *cognitive style*, caused by cultural distance (cultural difference) and those caused by the individual's deprivation of his or her own culture. Many of the difficulties culturally different students face stem from the incongruence between their previous learning experience and the demands of the new formal educational system. As a result, these students may have difficulties within the traditional Israeli educational system, which emphasises competition and relies on individualised work.

The teachers assume that what they perceive as basic cognitive and learning skills are natural to all students and that the teachers' task is merely to expose new immigrants to the required material. However, the problem is not the amount of material to be learned, but the absence of skills and strategies for comprehension and acquisition of the pre-determined subject matter.

Cross-cultural research has demonstrated that unschooled or insufficiently schooled children lack some of the cognitive capabilities essential for formal learning, including nonverbal problem-solving of the type used in the Raven Matrices test (Kaniel et al., 1991) and spontaneous structuring of material using more abstract categories (Skuy et al., 1995). Merely placing them in a classroom and exposing them to the regular curriculum does not prepare new immigrant students for such challenging tasks. The implementers suggest that in order to enable students to learn, teachers must engage them in learning in an active way using relevant

problems and group interaction, and that teachers should not only be transmitters of knowledge, but rather guides who facilitate learning. This is also in line with the intervention model used in our case and with the constructivist approach (see Chapter 3), which proposes that learners build their knowledge on what they already know, asserting that learning is active rather than passive.

The students' *classroom behaviour* exasperated the teachers. It appears they were personally offended by it, which is understandable, but counterproductive. They did not view it as a symptom of the students' alienation and did not consider alternative ways of dealing with it. Presumably ascribing it also to the students' cultural background, they felt it was not amenable to treatment by the individual teacher. Fradd et al (1989) offers a different view and claims that many behaviours, including disorganization, defensiveness and withdrawal may be attributed to various socio-cultural influences. Students who are in a process of adjusting to a new language and culture will experience some degree of social trauma; this may explain the students' behaviour.

In addition to the cultural difference approach, the concept of 'habitus' (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990) may also offer an explanation of why students behave in the classroom in a certain way. Students from a different type of schooling, for example a traditional Ethiopian background, may have a different way of behaving or may bring with them different habits. Bourdieu & Passeron(1990) would argue that the behaviour the Ethiopian immigrants display might be a reaction to coming into contact with a different form of 'habitus' (for example they tend to lower their eyes when spoken to). Teachers' misunderstanding of and reaction to students' culturally conditioned behaviour can lead to failure in school and in society.

The teachers seemed well aware that following the pre-determined *curriculum* was a mistake and they complained about it being unsuitable. Moreover, in this school the emphasis on religious studies (see the weekly schedule, Appendix E1 & E2) meant that other studies, indispensable for the students' integration in Israeli society, were neglected. For example, hardly any teachers mentioned the students' limited level of Hebrew as a problem or barrier to achievements in school and integration into society, while all of the teachers cited lack of motivation as being an obstacle to learning and integration. Surely an intensive language course focusing on concepts unfamiliar to them should have been perceived as a priority by the teachers.

The teachers made useful suggestions for additional topics to be included (see 6.2.5), but saw that there was little they could do about it.

7.3 Prospects for the Future as Perceived by the Teachers (see 6.2.3)

The findings show that the teachers were pessimistic not only about the students' chances of successful integration into Israeli society, but even about the outcome of the work they were doing. When teachers do not believe they can make a difference, the students no doubt feel it and it exacerbates their own lack of confidence. In this case the teachers' defeatist attitude was particularly harmful.

Teachers' expectations and beliefs are a crucial factor that may affect how immigrant students perform in school and subsequently how they will integrate into society. Research into the ways in which teachers interact with their students (Brophy and Good, 1974; Rowe, 1969) sheds considerable light on how teachers form expectations about their students. While referring to their present behaviour, they obviously have in mind how it will affect their future performance. However, the findings in this study also indicate another, perhaps even more important aspect: The way teachers view how their students function influences their own behaviour towards them.

Researchers found that teacher efficacy is related to a teacher's belief that one can successfully bring about the desired outcomes in one's students (Bandura, 1977; 1982; Gibson and Dembo, 1984; Soodak and Podell, 1993). An effective teacher does not perceive students' problems as products of the students' personal background, but rather, as an indication that adaptations must be made now in their own instructional approach so that learning new skills can take place. This is the crux of the matter in the case of the Ethiopian students: The teachers seemed incapable of looking ahead, a need inherent in educational work; their thinking was essentially past-oriented. The fact that the teachers felt that "the system has given up" made it doubly difficult for them – and for the students.

7.4 Teachers' Perceptions of their Own Difficulties in Fulfilling their Role (see 6.2.4)

While we may deplore the situation in this school, we should not blame the teachers for their inability to cope with the challenges this school population presents. When they shared their feelings with me, their struggle for "survival", their frustration and sense of personal inadequacy, it became clear that they cannot help the students unless they themselves are empowered. They realize they are in need of specific professional training and guidance, that there is a great deal they need to learn and appear willing to do so. Teachers need to feel successful and good about themselves and their abilities before they can empower their students to feel the same way (Purkey, 1970). If teachers experience feelings of failure and/or are deprived of personal satisfaction, their relationship with students and the school will ultimately suffer (Jeans, 1992). They blamed the school for lack of support and it appears that their various complaints were not unfounded. Tschannen-Moran et al.(1998) offer a different perspective and state that when teachers are faced with students like students in this case, who appear uninterested, and unwilling to invest effort into schoolwork, it is often easier they claim, for teachers to protect their sense of personal teaching efficacy by altering their outcome expectancies. Thus neither tries very hard and each blame the other for poor performances. This raises the question of how can this cycle of blame be broken? The answer may be in the teachers ability and freedom to select and modify the curriculum that will do both; provide teachers with an alternative to the curriculum and will facilitate learning new skills for the students. The model used in this study provides a chance for change.

7.5 Teachers' Perceptions of the Students' Needs (see 6.2.5)

The answers to the third question, placed at the end of the study, stem from the data gathered so far. The question arises – was I right in assessing these students' needs, how far was my choice of an intervention programme focusing on self-determination skills to empower them justified? From the implementers' reports about their sessions and from my own observations, it appears that this model does have something to offer in helping the students to better express their own wishes and analyze situations. However, a thorough study of the situation revealed its complexity and the urgent need to consider a whole range of the students' needs to

be met. I went back to my notes on the interviews to examine how the teachers defined the students' needs. The teachers' responses during the interviews suggest that the needs listed in Table 6.9 are pivotal for the success of their students in class and later in society. They relate to educational, social and emotional aspects. It is interesting to note that in the *educational sphere* the teachers do not suggest that there is a codified body of knowledge to be taught, but rather that the curriculum should provide students with appropriate skills that they may apply to a variety of content areas and real life circumstances. It is noteworthy that while most of the teachers mentioned the lack of study skills and motivation, and the need for more effective exposure to technology, they did not identify the command of the language as a need, neither of the Hebrew language per se (the students' mother tongue is Amharic), nor acquaintance with its conceptual world. This appears to reflect a lack of sensitivity to the difficulties of inter-cultural communication.

The *social aspect* reflects two areas of concern: first, the need for social adaptation and secondly for social reconstruction. In the former the focus is on helping students adapt to the new society (raising expectations and personal examples), while the latter suggests that the curriculum should equip the students with skills needed in the new society (relevant experiences and adult life skills). In this study such skills were emphasized by the teachers and they also related to the importance of role models. An interesting issue brought up by the teachers was the need for role models, provided by Ethiopian immigrants. The majority of role models that students see are in the fields of sport and music. It is rare for them to see a young Ethiopian in the teaching profession. In the specific school, for example, there are no Ethiopian teachers or other Ethiopian educational staff. The school has not made any real attempt to address this within the school itself. The teachers recognised this need and offered alternatives, for example the need for various types of role models. They mentioned a shortage of role models in achievement-related areas, as was the case in the other schools they attended prior to arriving at this school.

The *emotional aspect* suggests that the curriculum should help students develop to their full potential. This cannot be achieved without raising their self-esteem, badly mauled by their experiences in the new country and its schools. Thus, the focus is both on the individual and the here and now. The study provides ample evidence of the students' low self-image within the school context, a phenomenon

further exacerbated by the teachers' pessimistic attitude towards their chances of success.

The teachers' attitude and ability appears to be a key factor impinging on the situation. The findings of this study suggest that in this case, the main problem is the teachers' lack of willingness (and/or ability) to try and cope with the students' difficulties and not to allow their own value system or their unsubstantiated ideas about the students to affect their attitude to them. They simply deplore the students' lack of motivation, defining them as passive, instead of trying new approaches to arouse their motivation and provide the necessary support and measure of success, thus boosting their self-concept and self-reliance. Indeed, the implementers mentioned that there are a few teachers in the school whose attitudes and/or behaviours are very counterproductive to the students' motivation and progress. The evidence they present is that students avoid their classes, go in and out of the classroom and make no effort to learn the subject. This may be due to the fact that the implementers did not see the young Ethiopian immigrants as a frustrating problem that needed to be solved, but rather as an interesting challenge calling for a creative approach.

The Israeli educational system as described by teachers in this case neither provides an answer to the problems the teachers teaching Ethiopian immigrant students face, nor meets the needs these students have. Most commonly mentioned by both the teachers and the implementers was the contradiction that exists between the expectations of the educational system and what is actually dictated by the school and its administration. The teachers say that life skills and self-determination skills should be a priority, but do not give it priority in terms of study and time. Evidently, there is a need for a comprehensive approach and programme, encompassing a whole range of problems, revealed in this study.

7.6 Need for a Comprehensive Approach and Programme Formatting

From the data presented, a specific programme intended to empower Ethiopian immigrant students is apparently required, not just a limited project such as the one implemented for this study. This was emphasized by most of the teachers. Regarding what is important to teach Ethiopian immigrant students, the subjects one would have expected, such as language skills and mathematics, were not even mentioned, and need to be considered a priority. An appropriate curriculum must be

drawn up, but without impeding the development of the students' potential. The teachers strongly recommended promoting skills needed for the transition from school to workplace, and for integration into society; they felt the need for an approach that would foster students' empowerment.

> *"We need a well planned life skills programme that covers all the relevant needs and it should be started early so that some of the problems will be prevented."*

The importance of a climate of achievement in the school was emphasized by the implementers:

> *"I think that if the teachers' message were that it is worthwhile investing in them, the students would have tried harder. The teachers should also have given the students the feeling that they could contribute something from their own personal experience."*

Although most of the teachers did not actually use the term 'self-determination skills,' their emphasis on fostering the students' autonomy, on goal-setting and making choices implies that that the intervention programme was indeed aimed at meeting their needs in a crucial domain. The implementers felt that the students were capable of learning, but their current chances of success were minimal, because of the educational policy imposed on the teachers and the study methods used in this particular school. The teachers have to deal with the outcomes of these policies over which they feel they have little or no control. They have ideas about what needs to be included in the curriculum in order to empower the Ethiopian students, but their own lack of skills and a lack of support on the part of the administration prevent them from doing so.

What the teachers and implementers perceive as fundamental needs are a result of the students actually living in two worlds. There is the world of their culture and the world of the school, each of which has its own sets of beliefs, norms, values and expectations Bourdieu would refer to this as each having its own habitus. These are often in conflict with each other and leave the students in a state of dissonance over making decisions, choices, and selecting priorities. Both worlds are a reality for them and both are important to them at the same time.

Ben Ezer (1992) states that what the Ethiopian students' parents say is to be accepted without question and acted upon immediately; Ethiopian children are not expected to challenge or question what goes on in their homes. In society, however, they are expected to do both as an integral part of the absorption process. They are also expected to exercise initiative, analyse problems from a variety of perspectives, and test ideas and solutions. Since these tend to be skills that students will not learn at home, they must be taught them at school. In order to be able to implement these skills in their lives, they must practise them in school – this is exactly what the intervention programme aimed to achieve.

One implementer tried to sum up her experience and said:

> *"The difficulties for the students arise when some of the values, ways of doing things and expectations of the two worlds are in conflict with each other."*

Although the Israeli educational system prides itself on having considerable experience with immigrants, the question this study raises is what is being done with this experience. Taking into account that this situation is unlikely to change drastically in the near future, it is imperative that ways are found to counteract this situation by means of a new comprehensive approach to the education of Ethiopian immigrant children, including a specific program, aimed at empowering them. Analysis of the evidence appears to warrant the initial assumptions underlying this study, that there is a true need for teaching self-determination skills. By complementing the curriculum with such skills, crucial to the immigrant students' integration into society, a process will be generated, enabling the Ethiopian students to exploit their own potential and participate actively in structuring their lives.

However, for such a programme to have a substantial and lasting effect, it must be accompanied by many other changes in the approach to the education of these students and their teachers. Some suggestions to this effect will be made in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Coming home to a strange land"... I have chosen this phrase, contributed to me by one of the teachers, to serve as the title of my work and as the theme for discussion of the research. To many people in Israel the term *home* signifies freedom and choice. To the Ethiopian immigrants coming home (to Israel) was a major change, and adjustments to what seemed to be a strange society were expected of them in their own home. Ben-Ezer (1992), who studied the journey of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel, quotes the interviewees' description of their arrival in Israel: "We have arrived – yet did not arrive". They felt that they had fulfilled the dream of many generations by returning to their homeland, and had re-established the fundamental bond between the people, their land and God. However, in terms of joining Israeli society, they felt they had not yet arrived. The journey to Israel that they began in Ethiopia is continuing.

8.1 Implementation of the Intervention Model

To what extent did the introduction and implementation of the teaching model actually produce the desired outcome? Here, unfortunately, I must be very modest. I cannot provide any solid evidence beyond the implementers' perceptions that their intervention did produce some change, It appears that an approach, implemented for a limited time and not involving all or most of the teachers, cannot produce significant results.

However, it should be noted as mentioned earlier that the implementers did perceive a positive change in the students' behaviour as a function of the intervention. They reported that the teaching model was useful and that they would continue to use it in their work with immigrant youth. While self-determination is a concept that implies independent action, as a first step instructional activities can focus on problem solving, making choices and goal-setting. One implementer said:

"They do have dreams and they do want to learn."

Although the statistical data derived from the questionnaires are not significant, the evidence provided by the implementers suggests that active

student involvement in the educational process can assist them in evaluating their own progress. The teaching model provides a chance for the students to verbalize and voice their concerns in order to move toward self-regulation and enhance their capacity for achievement.

The implementers identified some limitations of the model, including the amount of time needed to learn to apply it, as well as the time needed to use it in the classroom, and the need to maintain daily contact with the students. Although these limitations need to be addressed, the fact that the students made some progress suggests that the model has potential value and may be effective when used with immigrant minority students in general and with Ethiopian immigrant students in Israel in particular.

8.2 The Encounter between Two Cultures

Despite the fact that public policy concerning the absorption of immigrant students in general and the question of youth villages in particular is one of high priority, many students remain on the margins of the educational system. The educational staff find it difficult to deal with the implications of this phenomenon. The initial impression one gets from studying the findings indicates that certain elements in the school system hinder the students' progress. This was the situation in the boarding school in this particular youth village. The impetus for the intervention programme was my feeling that the explanations given at the school for the students' underachievement were inadequate, and my refusal to accept a situation in which certain educational goals were given up for the Ethiopian students, based upon the assumption that they lack the ability to overcome their learning difficulties in their new land.

The encounter between two cultures or more precisely the distance between them is often expressed in a series of failures experienced when there is a clash between the immigrants' culture of origin and that of the absorbing culture. The attitudes of the absorbers and the existing cultural differences often lead to the non-recognition of the immigrants' culture of origin as valid or to the disparagement of its values. This is clearly manifested in the case of the Ethiopian culture, when teachers related to the homes and culture of origin of the immigrants as sources of their difficulties.

The teachers displayed a lack of understanding of the difficulties the students were experiencing, which suggests that the teachers in this school have adopted the view that the students are culturally deprived, that they enter school lacking in basic academic skills, and that these deficiencies are associated with perceived inadequacies in the family learning environment of the children. Thus educational programmes are supposed to "compensate" for such deficiencies in families. In this case it was the adoption of such an approach that may have prevented the teachers from seriously trying to remedy the situation. Opponents of the cultural deprivation approach (Feuerstein and Kazolin, 1995) argue that Ethiopian immigrant families in general are not deficient, but their culture is merely different from the mainstream culture. I would like to broaden this perspective and say that, because we (in Israel) have tried to impose assimilation on the Ethiopians, we demand that they abandon their "old ways" and they are made to appear deficient, when compared to the mainstream culture. Bernstein (1970) suggests:

> *"We need to distinguish between the principles and operations that teachers transmit and develop in children, and contexts they create in order to do this. We should start knowing that the social experience that the child already possesses is valid and significant, and that this social experience should be reflected back to him as being valid and significant" (p. 347).*

The intervention programme adopted the above approach. The culture of the Ethiopian students was presumed to be rich but different. If such an approach is to be adopted by the education system, a decision must be made: Do we change the goals of education for culturally different students or should schools demand that their teachers adopt different means of achieving the same goals? The latter calls for efforts to be made both institution-wide and in the individual classrooms, placing strong emphasis on deliberately introducing practices which build on the strength of the cultural background of the immigrant students. As shown in this study, the curriculum, as implemented today, suggests that current ways of constructing and teaching knowledge are value-laden and designed to benefit only certain groups in society. When the authorities, as a matter of policy, impose their will by sending the Ethiopian immigrant children to substandard schools, this suggests that it is the power systems (the absorption agency and the political establishment) that determine

who has the right to receive a good education. The educational system perpetuates this power relationship, and thus makes it difficult for those coming from an acquiescent culture to make their voice heard. From this perspective this thesis may be seen as presenting that voice.

The approach undertaken by the intervention programme is clearly one that claims that the student's voice needs to be heard. This means developing new curricular programs or adding to the existing ones elements outside the academic disciplines and more in line with socio-cultural perspectives (Vygotsky, 1978; Wretch 1991), embedding the subject matter within the specific situational context. This is particularly relevant to the students in this study, and others who are in schools not part of this study. Perhaps the conclusion to be drawn from the statements made by the teachers, implementers and students is that, in addition to self-determination skills, a culturally relevant curriculum is needed, one which exploits the learners' previous experiences to build up new knowledge. It further suggests that teachers must engage in a process of learning, in cooperation with the students and also learning from them, and see their students as individuals, people in their own right, not just products of a "deficient" culture (Bullock & Wikeley, 2004).

It is usually assumed that the possibility to improve the students' learning depends first and foremost on the approaches adopted by the educational system that absorbs these youngsters. Wiel (1989) found that in this context the great majority of people involved in the process of absorbing Ethiopians into the existing educational system possess only minimal knowledge about their spiritual and religious life and certainly have no knowledge of the conflicts they experience. Findings from my research confirm the above, but also suggest that the teachers have not made any real effort to become acquainted with the students' background and adhere to certain prevalent stereotypical labelling.

It is interesting to note that while the teachers perceived the cultural aspects as being highly important in impeding the integration of immigrant students into the school and society, the implementers' reports on their work in the field indicated that the fact that the students were culturally different was not a major obstacle to their working with them. Their view on this issue was that they saw self-determination skills as vital for integration, which indicates that they felt that something needed to be taught in addition to the curriculum, but not instead of it. The working assumption

of the implementers was that, while students were quite capable of learning, they needed to be provided with skills that supported learning. There are several possible explanations for this approach:

1. The implementers saw their role as providing the opportunity to acquire tools that would help the students in their future integration, rather than as being sources of professional knowledge or representatives of the dominant culture.

2. The status of the implementers in the school was not that of the permanent staff. They did not feel bound by the school's policy.

3. The students' cultural background was strongly manifested in the implementers' work: They encouraged the students to choose situations from their own experience and deal with them in a supportive environment. These elements are highly significant, since the prevalent perception in Israeli society is that one focuses on bringing the immigrant closer to Israeli culture as quickly as possible and does not invest in strengthening the students' self-image by referring back to their culture of origin. This in fact was what was being attempted through the use of the intervention programme. The implementers perceived as advantageous to highlight the students' own culture as a way of learning about their needs. This enabled them to function as bridges between the immigrant students and the demands of both school and later on of society. The implementers were thus acting to introduce the new society to the immigrant students and not push them to accept it unconditionally.

From the 1950s to the early 1990s, a single model of integration was prevalent in Israeli culture, that of the 'melting pot'. However, the massive rate of immigration in the past decade has presented schools with the opportunity to adopt a pluralistic, multicultural approach (Ben-Porat, 2003). To do so some basic questions had to be answered, such as whether the schools are providers of education and opportunity, or representatives of the government absorption policies. The question also arose whether the teachers see themselves primarily as "efficient" teachers (who only represent and transmit policies), or as "good" and "successful" educators and enablers. Another question we may ask is how schools are to strike a balance between these two poles. From the implementers' point of view, adopting the intervention programme could lead to a change and is therefore essential, even if not all the school staff see it in this way. The findings suggest that we must continually

ask ourselves if indeed there are "best practices", and if so, whether they can be applied universally.

8.3 The Teachers' Role and Difficulties

In this study I claimed that the reason for the Ethiopian students' passivity and difficulties in school might be the result of the absorption process and policies imposed on them. However, as suggested by the findings and discussion, it appears that the problem of passivity manifests itself not only in the behaviour of the students, but also in the attitude of the educators. To the best of my knowledge, the literature has largely ignored or overlooked the possibility that the educators themselves experience helplessness in teaching immigrant children, resulting in their passivity when facing seemingly insoluble educational problems, leading to a lack of desire to invest time and effort in their students and as a result generating feelings of failure and alienation. Although the findings indicate a very small change I would like to suggest that enhancing self-determination skills, at least when dealing with immigrant populations labelled as passive, should evolve into a system of interlocking cycles of skills, involving students, school staff and the institutional environment. If the above findings are valid, then they imply that any intervention that is aimed at students alone, or even at teachers alone, will be insufficient; what is needed is to promote the self-determination skills of the students, while at the same time addressing the helplessness and "passivity" displayed by both the educators and the school administration.

The teachers indicated that they could not see the Ethiopian students becoming productive citizens. According to Sarason (1995),

> *"the initial object of change is not students, the classroom, or the system; it is the attitudes and conceptions of educators themselves" (p. 84).*

Teachers of immigrants in general, and of the Ethiopian immigrants in particular, have a moral obligation to ensure that all students experience a welcoming school environment, affording equitable access to education. This is especially important for those students who are members of traditionally weak populations, such as the Ethiopians in Israel, Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders (Thomas 1998). Although the teachers placed emphasis on the students' culture as a

cause of passivity, knowledge of the students' background provides important clues to cognitive and behaviour styles (Banks and Banks, 1993) and has an impact on what and how learners should be taught, as well as on when and how information should be presented (Garcia and Malkin, 1993). Unfortunately, few teachers are aware of the cultural characteristics (e.g. values, cognitive functioning, behavioural norms) of most groups and are even less knowledgeable about culturally appropriate instructional modifications (Cummins, 1984). In fact, this case study shows that teachers give little consideration to the background of their students and this means that even if cultural characteristics are identified, educators usually have no idea about how to adapt classroom instruction to the students' needs. Until the teachers familiarize themselves with cultural differences, many students will be taught in ways that do not optimally promote advancement. Lifshitz, Noam and Segal (1997) pointed out that only 30% of the teachers reported that they had received any kind of preparation assisting them in dealing with Ethiopian immigrant students. Ben-Ezer (1992) points out that teachers in state religious schools tended to have shorter training courses and were in many cases less equipped to deal with complex teaching situations (such as a multicultural context).

The main findings regarding the teachers show that the following attitudes may be considered as factors impeding the learning of Ethiopian immigrant children:

1. Helplessness: The teachers felt considerable stress and were unable to cope; this led them to conclude that nothing could be done to alter the situation.
2. Misinterpretation of the situation: The teachers felt that the problems Ethiopian students were experiencing stemmed from other factors, not directly related to the teachers themselves, or their approach and methods.
3. Blaming others: The teachers felt that lack of progress by the Ethiopian immigrants was due to what others had done in the past, not to what they were doing in the present.

If we examine what these teachers have to cope with, we find the following factors:

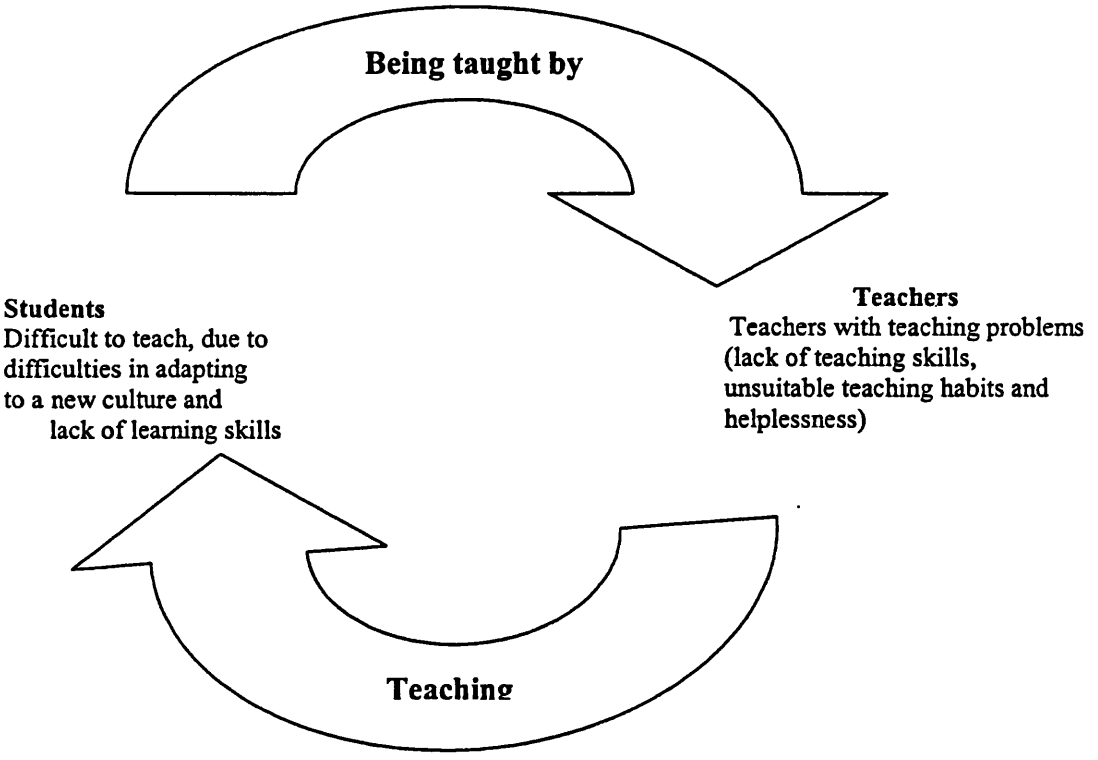
1. They bear great responsibility, since the students at this school were transferred there as a last attempt to keep them within an educational environment, the last opportunity before being thrown into the fray.
2. They work under very difficult conditions with little support.

3. They lack the necessary skills to teach Ethiopian immigrants.
4. Judged by normative standards, their work is doomed to failure.

It is noteworthy that Friedman et al. (2004) a researcher studying social exclusion of children in Israeli schools has reached similar conclusions about the difficulties teachers experience in teaching such children. Among his findings he mentions teachers helplessness and lack of satisfaction and support.

The following vicious circle in Figure 8.1 sums up the situation:

Figure 8.1: The vicious circle of teachers with difficulties teaching students with difficulties



This would suggest that working with Ethiopian immigrant students should be a branch of the teaching profession demanding specific knowledge and skills, and commitment to the advancement of the students.

From this study the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Teachers should be given the opportunity to choose whether they want to work with this population or not.

2. Teachers should specialize in teaching minority students and take pride in doing so.
3. A 'whole school' approach should be adopted, wherein there is no one factor to blame, since everyone is accountable.
4. The teachers should work together as a team or task force.

Moving away from the traditional hierarchic structure with the head-teacher as the traditional decision maker to a more participatory style of management would challenge and empower teachers. Teachers should abandon their traditional position as the gatekeepers of what is considered legitimate knowledge, because to do nothing apart from teaching the regular programme is to continue the current reproduction of educational disadvantages across generations. Moreover, the team should include staff from the students' country of origin to serve as role models and as mediators, able to reduce misunderstandings stemming from cultural differences.

It appears that the main obstacles to the education of these immigrant children are the negative views the teachers hold regarding their students' abilities to learn and acquire new skills. In this case it seems that teachers are not convinced that Ethiopian immigrant children can move easily and fully into the educational and social mainstream. The teachers have little faith in them and even less in themselves as being able to help them acquire the new skills needed in order to function in the new society. From the interviews it is clear that the students are seen as the source of the problem, and that their lack of success is predominantly explained by certain psychological features, such as feelings of low self-esteem, lack of motivation, and lack of intellectual ability. Attribution theory suggests that it is the individual who is responsible for the situation, rather than any social or structural causes (Kelly, 1972). The teachers explain the students' failure as being due to something inherent in them, which legitimises both subsequent marginalisation (non-integration) within the wider society, and a process that perpetuates the existing social status quo. Bourdieu would argue that the Ethiopian students, as newcomers and not familiar with the local codes, lack the 'habitus' needed in order to function in this new field. Bourdieu defines 'habitus' as the "system of acquired dispositions functioning on the practical level as categories of perception and assessment or as classificatory principles, as well as being the organizing principles of action" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 p.13). He goes on to define 'field' as the site where the struggle takes place between the

dominant (Israeli society) and the subordinate population (the Ethiopian immigrants). In this case the teachers in their negative attitudes reveal perceptions due to their own 'habitus' and the way it relates to the field they work in. Teaching and learning do not take place in a vacuum, but are strongly affected by the field in which they function. That field can be the educational institution itself or the subject taught, but it is affected by the 'habitus' of the individual teacher and the individual student. This study highlights the way in which different types of 'habitus' can collide in a teaching and learning environment.

8.4 The Implications and Significance of the Study

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study that attempts to make the connection between the need to provide self-determination skills and integration into a new society. It has important implications for policy planners, administrators and educators.

Promoting self-determination skills has been shown to be a complex process that requires a variety of educational activities throughout a students' educational experience. Such efforts include active student involvement in goal-setting and decision-making, and opportunities to express preferences, make choices, and learn about their own strengths and limitations. The teaching model described and implemented in this study provides a process by which teachers can promote and enhance self-determination skills. If societies want to facilitate the optimal development of young immigrants, they must provide educational support services that are based on the analysis of the needs of these young people.

Using the teaching model fosters student-teacher interaction and clarifies expectations. Furthermore, as students and teachers work together, discussing goals and making choices, there are numerous opportunities to promote student-directed activities to enhance self-regulation and self-monitoring skills. The goals can relate to subject matter designated by the teacher (e.g. "let's decide on a goal that will be helpful in studying science, math or even another language"), or can be related to an overall need for increased communication between students and administrators (e.g. "what about writing a letter to the head of the school in order to change the schedule").

With the demands on the teachers' time, especially in relation to covering the curriculum, it is difficult to fit in a separate project promoting self-determination. I suggest that one way to do this is integrating the promotion of self-determination skills into daily learning. The teachers interviewed for this study suggested that the model should also be used with younger Ethiopian immigrant children, so that they already possess these skills at the time they reach adolescence. By doing so, we can better prepare the children to become self-determined adolescents and adults. The implementers concluded that the model was easy to use and could be used in conjunction with any curriculum, because various subjects could be woven into the model's structure.

It should be noted that the model is not a curriculum per se, and should not be seen as such. It provides a process that teachers can use and adapt to their own professional preferences and instructional strengths. A wide array of instructional activities could be implemented within the context of the model, and teachers could develop curricular materials to support their particular implementation of the model. The strength of the model lies in the fact that all students, including those who have had limited life experience and who possess limited goal-setting and choice-making skills will benefit from the use of this model. By being exposed to these activities through the repeated use of the model, all the students should eventually be able to participate.

This research makes a contribution not only to educational practice, but also to overall policy, not only for the benefit of immigrants in Israel, but also of institutions abroad serving immigrants from developing countries. It highlights how important it is for educational institutions to adopt strategies promoting educational opportunities for cultural minorities. In order to implement such models, educators and policy-makers must first understand the cultural factors leading to the gaps in education, and that endowing the Ethiopian immigrant students with the necessary skills and abilities are long-term educational processes, not merely one-time projects.

By proposing the teaching of self-determination skills I am adopting a pro-action stand,reaching out to the sought after immigrants to Israel, hoping to give them the opportunity to exploit their undetected and unfulfilled potential. As an educator I have come to the conclusion that teaching self-determination skills to Ethiopian immigrants will contribute to the reduction of the cultural differences and

will enhance their autonomy and their functioning in Israeli society. But as this study indicates, teaching self-determination skills cannot be carried out in isolation; it requires the cooperation of the whole staff of the school and especially that of the teachers. If teachers lack the knowledge needed to effectively teach all students - including those from a cultural background different from their own – and if research suggests that this knowledge can be acquired, then teacher preparation and teacher in-service programmes must help teachers acquire this knowledge. Teaching is a complex activity, requiring not only technical knowledge and skills but also the ability to reflect upon teaching and to make decisions, based on sound educational principles (Schon, 1987; Carter, 1990). Effective teachers are viewed as decision-makers (Morine-Dershimer, 1989), able to analyze the effectiveness of educational decisions, based on their knowledge of theories, curricula and methods. Lacking those skills prevents teachers from making appropriate instructional decisions, based on their analysis of the students' instructional needs. This appears to be the case at the school under study. In addition, the overall attitude to these students must change – indeed the attitude of large sectors of the Israeli population to immigrants from Ethiopia. Clearly, this is an issue that cannot be tackled here.

In this study I have addressed the issues of empowerment for Ethiopian immigrant students in Israel. Embedded in this discussion are issues important for educators responding to challenges facing the education of these learners. I believe that educators and support personnel need not only additional training and opportunities to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills; I would like to suggest that if teachers are to be committed to teaching immigrants in general and Ethiopian immigrants in particular, it seems appropriate that they should be taught the intervention model by experiencing the same process the students are meant to go through. Universities and teachers' colleges must alter their programmes to best prepare educators to maximize learning opportunities for their immigrant students in general and for the Ethiopian students in particular. Attempts should also be made to assist the students' families in acquiring an understanding of their children's needs in the new country.

In conclusion I may add the following recommendations:

1. There is a need for a more culturally relevant curriculum, validating the Ethiopians' immigrant experience, while contributing to their acquisition of new

knowledge. This can be combined with explicit fostering of self-determination skills.

2. The teachers should be helped to acquire teaching styles and skills, enabling them to use the above material to further the students' progress and self-confidence, as well as their own sense of achievement.
3. The parents should be involved, and a partnership based on mutual respect should be created.

8.5 Limitations of this Study and Further Exploration of the Issues

An awareness of the limitations of this study is important for the understanding of its potential practical usefulness, as well as for future research. The limitations of this study are those common to most qualitative research - the small sample and the limited representatives of the sample, both of which reduce generalisability. The results must be understood as preliminary and they require further validation through other qualitative and quantitative research.

This study describes the implementation of an intervention programme in one particular school. The study was also intended to provide baseline data, against which changes and progress made by the school involved in this project can be measured. The dilemma posed by writing up the findings is that, in describing the situation, the researcher is publicly exposing the people most in need of support. Owing to the sensitive nature of the issue, permission had to be granted by the director of the youth village to enable me to pursue this research. Therefore information about this population had to be protected on ethical grounds, and focusing on individual students' life stories was discouraged.

The study, which examines a project in Israel and is embedded in the Israeli context, is being submitted to a British university. This calls for extensive explanations about the Israeli setting and about the specific culture focused on (which may make the thesis less reader friendly). However, it may be of special interest to British readers, in view of the large numbers of immigrants in Britain with roots in very different cultures.

Another potential limitation, related to the use of one particular setting, is the lack of the possibility for comparison. While no other setting was studied, affording such a possibility, the use of the extensive literature on teaching self-determination

skills to other types of students served as a source of comparison. Moreover, by limiting the study to one school, the research avoided the pitfall of using two schools, possibly differing on variables such as teacher education, teacher competence, and type of school. However, it is advisable to include a number of schools in any further research of the effectiveness of this teaching model. Inevitably, the findings of a case study (by its very nature) tend to be unique to the particular school. However, there is much to be learned from examining the intricacies of real-life practice. When a number of similar programmes have been implemented and studied, a clear picture will emerge of which practices are more effective than others.

Scholars treat research based on such a small sample (14 students) cautiously, but it should be noted that, although this group is small, it may be considered representative of many immigrant students studying in (religious) boarding schools in Israel. Owing to the small sample examined, the recommendations based on the findings of this study should be considered merely as suggestions. It will be necessary to delve in greater detail into how and under what circumstances the findings may be generalised to other situations and populations. Therefore additional research is needed to examine in greater detail how other immigrant groups in Israel adapt to school and meet the school demands. This will help shed light on the process of adaptation of immigrant students to the school environment.

This form of testing also raises the question of generalization: To what extent can this notion of providing self-determination skills to Ethiopian students in order to improve their learning at school and their integration into society be applied to other educational settings. Schon and Rein (1994, cited in Friedman et al. 2004) propose the term "reflective transfer", which suggests that the theory and application presented in this paper should be used as a model for guiding behaviour in similar situations. In this sense, generalization is actually a process of testing. The goal is not to show that the teaching model "works", but to use it in other settings to expand the knowledge of the practice and acquire an in-depth understanding of the problem itself. While the model did not produce the desired outcome in this study, it can at least provide a basis for reflection, further experimentation, and adaptation to a new set of circumstances.

Carrying out research in a school that serves special populations is a complex project. Moreover, the nature of the data is particularly sensitive, since the students

are adolescents whose natural course of development has been disrupted by immigration, and some of them are under probation for substance abuse. The most detailed evidence in this regard comes from studies of West Indian children in the U.K. Graham and Meadows (1967), in a clinical study of 55 West Indian immigrant children and 55 English born children as a control group, matched for age and sex, found that the immigrants showed substantially more antisocial behaviour than the English children. The most striking finding (for the purpose of this study) was that by Rutter et al. (1974): In their intensive follow-up study of samples of West Indian children both at school and at home, they discovered that the behavioural disorders, so prevalent among the immigrant children, were manifested almost entirely at school. At home they were found to display no more behavioural disorders than did their English peers. In Israel Horowitz and Frenkel (1976) reported a similar recurrent pattern of behavioural disorders among immigrant children. Therefore, although the subject of this thesis was the education of immigrant students, it would have been helpful if the research had also included the students' families. Although the research concentrates on the school environment, obviously other social contexts also have a highly significant influence on the students.

According to Palmer, and Wehmeyer (2003), families are the essential component in promoting self-determination; efforts that proceed without active family involvement, as in the case of the Ethiopian immigrants placed in youth villages, will inevitably be less successful than they would be, if the families were actively involved. However, in the case of the Ethiopian students it may be assumed that some of the adults have the same need and have not had the opportunity to learn skills that enable them to make choices and exert greater control over their lives. Further research is needed in order to ascertain the role of the families in supporting self-determination skills and what families need to do to be able to foster self-determination and self-direction of their members, since self-determination is an important contributor to an enhanced quality of life. Enabling and supporting self-determination (the internal locus of control) reflects recognition of the unique worth of every person and conveys respect for the individual's dignity.

Clearly, schools alone are not able to change significant features of society and culture. In order for educational intervention programmes to be effective, schools should coordinate their efforts with other socialization agents, to see if this would

increase the chances of producing change. Another important area of study concerns the ways Ethiopian families cope with life in Israel and what possible conflicts arise between their worldview and that of their children. It would also be valuable to consider the factors enabling some Ethiopian immigrants to integrate successfully in Israeli society.

It is impossible to determine how generalizable these findings are without further research. However, some of the core cultural aspects, characteristic of the Ethiopian experience may well characterize other cultures. For example, Markus and Kitayama (1991) mention that similar social characteristics have been identified in Asia, Africa and some Latin American cultures. Thus the findings of this study may be relevant to similar groups of immigrants from various cultures.

8.6 Concluding Thoughts

This study began in seeking answers to a problem detected in a school. I feel however that this study raises more questions than it answers. Results coming from this inquiry not only expand on the existing literature reviewed but also reminds readers how classification by culture, and ethnicity are largely informed by social and political pressures. One of the main obstacles on facing new immigrant students on their way to modern education is the misunderstanding and misjudgement of their abilities. Teachers behaviours and attitudes towards Ethiopian immigrants in this inquiry, related to their perceptions of difference resulting in their difficulties teaching.

In the discussion I presented my interpretation of the findings, based on my studies of the issues raised in the research, as well as on dilemmas pertaining to my worldview. Despite my efforts to treat the topic with caution and sensitiveness, the experience of the unique culture of these immigrants from Ethiopia is partly beyond my reach, and I am well aware that as a native Israeli, I am *a priori* a stranger to this culture. I am not, however, a stranger to the immigrant experience, I myself was an immigrant child, and grew up in an immigrant family in Israel. At the age of twelve I immigrated to the USA with my family. My research and work with Ethiopian immigrant children have brought me to a deeper understanding of what it means for a child to be uprooted and brought to a new country, with no voice and no choice in the matter. Moreover, as an educator, I am convinced more than ever that Ethiopian

students need to be taught by well-prepared teachers who are committed to teaching immigrants, who choose to teach immigrants, who are sensitive to their needs and posses a repertoire of appropriate skills and methods. I am deeply concerned about the predicament of immigrant children and my study was aimed at improving their chances of leading a satisfying and productive life in Israel.

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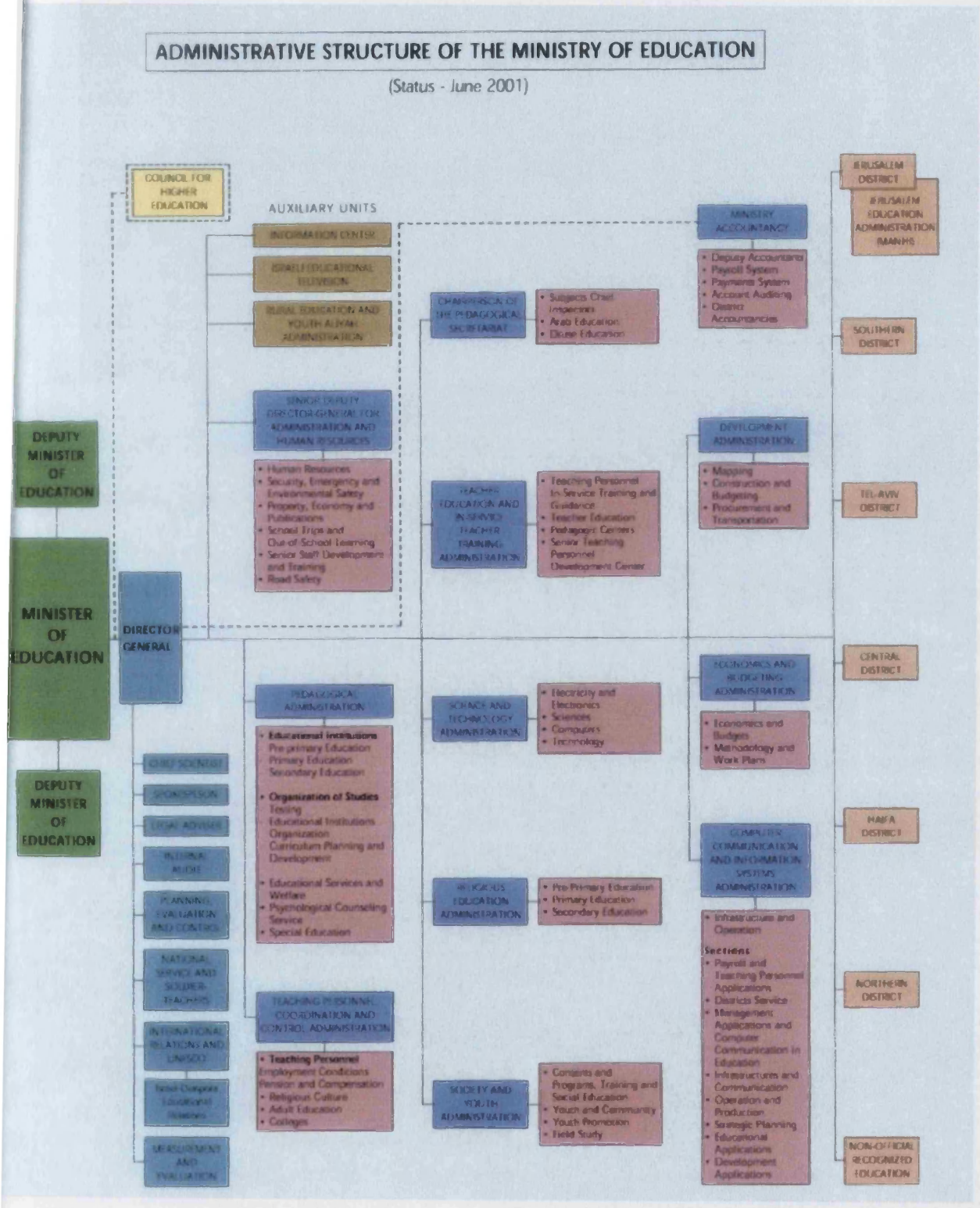
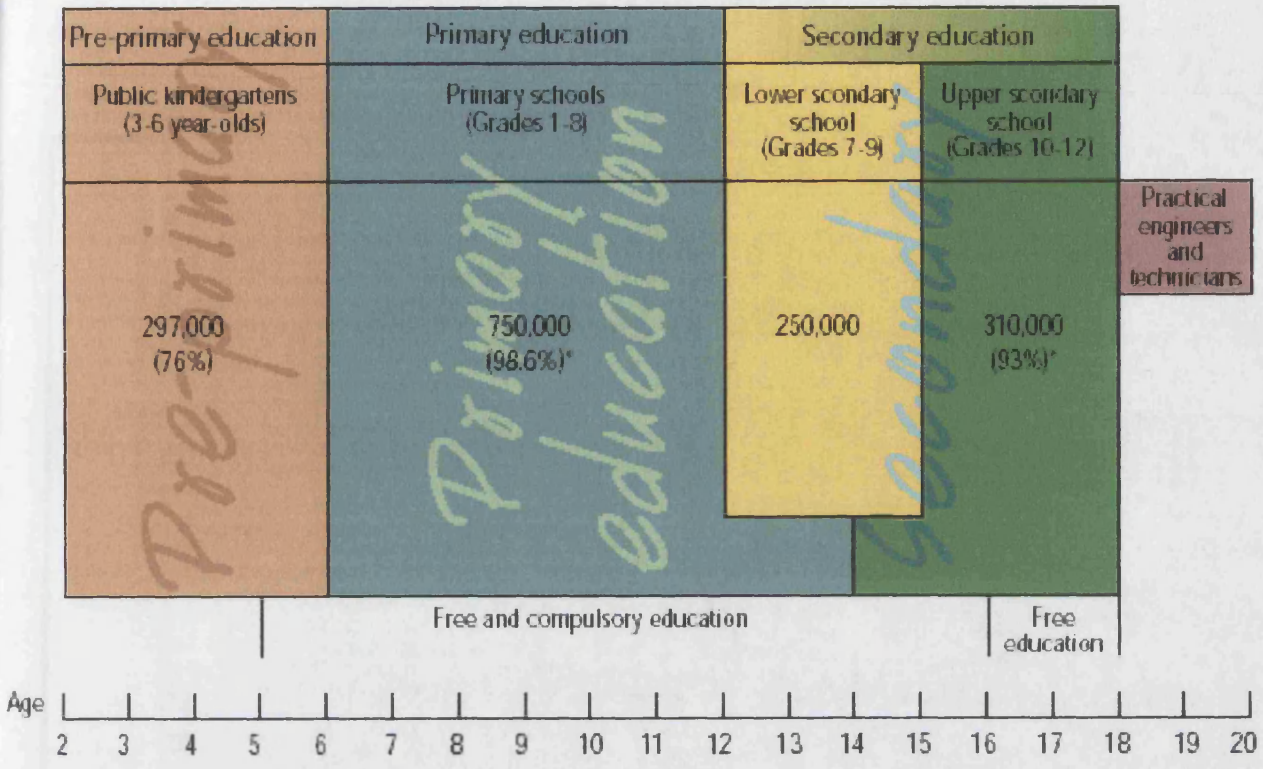
APPENDIX

A


ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(Status - June 2001)
COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
AUXILIARY UNITS
INFORMATION CENTER
ISRAELI EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION
RURAL EDUCATION AND YOUTH ALIYAH ADMINISTRATION
SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES
• Human Resources
• Security, Emergency and Environmental Safety
• Property, Economy and Publications
• School Trips and Out-of-School Learning
• Senior Staff Development and Training
• Road Safety
CHAIRPERSON OF THE PEDAGOGICAL SECRETARIAT
• Subjects Chief Inspectors
• Arab Education
• Druze Education
TEACHER EDUCATION AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
• Teaching Personnel In-Service Training and Guidance
• Teacher Education
• Pedagogic Centers
• Senior Teaching Personnel Development Center
MINISTRY ACCOUNTANCY
• Deputy Accountant
• Payroll System
• Payments System
• Account Auditing
• District Accountancies
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
• Mapping
• Construction and Budgeting
• Procurement and Transportation
ECONOMICS AND BUDGETING ADMINISTRATION
• Economics and Budgets
• Methodology and Work Plans
COMPUTER, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION
• Infrastructure and Operation
Sections
• Payroll and Teaching Personnel Applications
• Districts Service
• Management Applications and Computer Communication in Education
• Infrastructures and Communication
• Operation and Production
• Strategic Planning
• Educational Applications
• Development Applications
JERUSALEM DISTRICT
JERUSALEM EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION MANHS
SOUTHERN DISTRICT
TEL-AVIV DISTRICT
CENTRAL DISTRICT
HAIFA DISTRICT
NORTHERN DISTRICT
NON-OFFICIAL RECOGNIZED EDUCATION
DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION
DIRECTOR GENERAL
CHIEF SCIENTIST
SPOKESPERSON
LEGAL ADVISER
INTERNAL AUDIT
PLANNING, EVALUATION AND CONTROL
NATIONAL SERVICE AND SOLDIER-TEACHERS
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND UNESCO
MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
PEDAGOGICAL ADMINISTRATION
• Educational Institutions
Pre-primary Education
Primary Education
Secondary Education
• Organization of Studies
Testing
Educational Institutions Organization
Curriculum Planning and Development
• Educational Services and Welfare
• Psychological Counseling Service
• Special Education
TEACHING PERSONNEL COORDINATION AND CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
• Teaching Personnel
Employment Conditions
Pension and Compensation
• Religious Culture
• Adult Education
• Colleges
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADMINISTRATION
• Electricity and Electronics
• Sciences
• Computers
• Technology
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION
• Pre-Primary Education
• Primary Education
• Secondary Education
SOCIETY AND YOUTH ADMINISTRATION
• Contents and Programs, Training and Social Education
• Youth and Community
• Youth Promotion
• Field Study

B

STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, 2000/01



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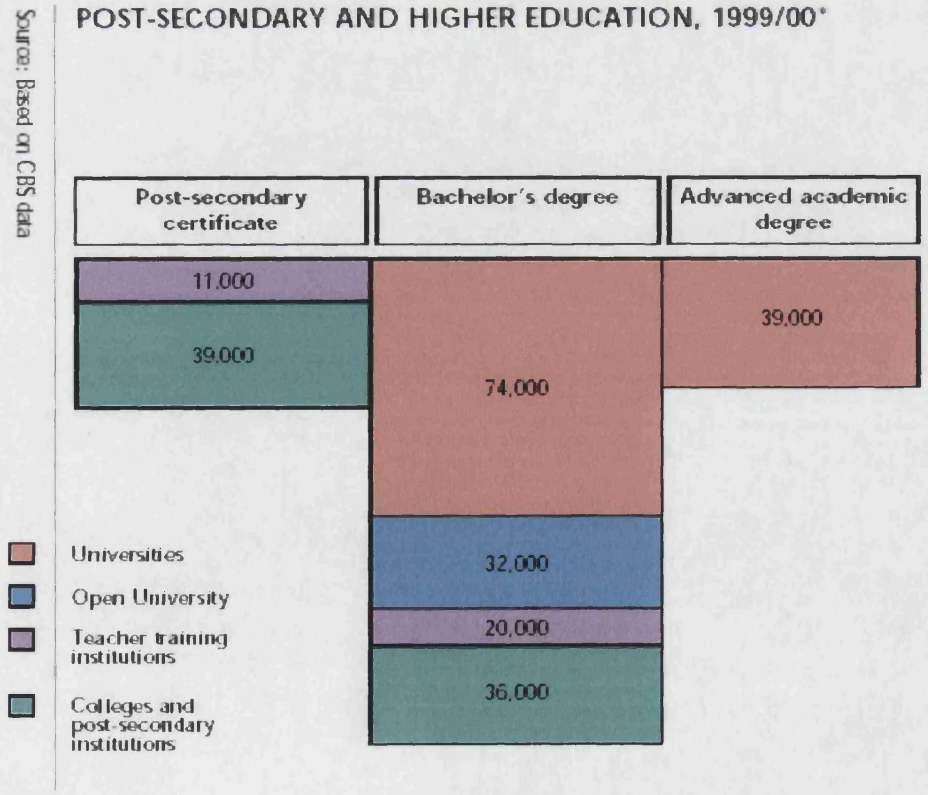
POST-SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION, 1999/00*



The Arc's Self-Determination Scale

Adolescent Version

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (Adolescent Version) is a student self-report measure of self-determination designed for use by adolescents with cognitive disabilities. The scale has two primary purposes:

- To provide students with cognitive disabilities and educators a tool that assists them in identifying student strengths and limitations in the area of self-determination; and
- To provide a research tool to examine the relationship between self-determination and factors that promote/inhibit this important outcome.

The scale has 72 items and is divided into four sections. Each section examines a different essential characteristic of self-determination: Autonomy, Self-Regulation, Psychological Empowerment and Self-Realization. Each section has unique directions that should be read before completing the relevant items. Scoring the scale (see Procedural Guidelines for scoring directions) results in a total self-determination score and subdomain scores in each of the four essential characteristics of self-determination. A comprehensive discussion and exploration of self-determination as an educational outcome is provided in The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Procedural Guidelines, as well as detailed scoring procedures and a discussion about the use of self-report measures in general. The scale should not be used until the administrator is thoroughly familiar with these issues.

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (Adolescent Version) was developed by The Arc National Headquarters with funding from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), under Cooperative Agreement #H023J20012. Questions used in Section One (Autonomy) were adapted, with permission from the authors, from the Autonomous Functioning Checklist. Questions used in Section 4 (Self-Realization) were adapted, with permission from the author, from the Short form of the Personal Orientation Inventory. Appropriate citations for both instruments are available in The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Procedural Guidelines. The Arc gratefully acknowledges the generosity of these researchers.

By Michael Wehmeyer, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Kathy Kelchner, M.Ed., Project Director
Self-Determination Assessment Project

Student's name _____

Date _____

School _____

Teacher's name _____

The Arc

Section One
Autonomy

Directions:

Check the answer on each question that BEST tells how you act in that situation. There are no right or wrong answers. Check only one answer for each question. (If your disability limits you from actually performing the activity, but you have control over the activity (such as a personal care attendant), answer like you performed the activity.)

1A. Independence: Routine personal care and family oriented functions **1A. Subtotal** _____

	I do not even if I have the chance	I do sometimes when I have the chance	I do most of the time I have the chance	I do every time I have the chance
1. I make my own meals or snacks.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I care for my own clothes.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I do chores in my home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I keep my own personal items together.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I do simple first aid or medical care for myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I keep good personal care and grooming.	☐	☐	☐	☐

1B. Independence: Interaction with the environment **1B. Subtotal** _____

	I do not even if I have the chance	I do sometimes when I have the chance	I do most of the time I have the chance	I do every time I have the chance
7. I make friends with other kids my age.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I use the post office.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I keep my appointments and meetings.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I deal with salespeople at stores and restaurants.	☐	☐	☐	☐

1C. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Recreational and leisure time **1C. Subtotal** _____

	I do not even if I have the chance	I do sometimes when I have the chance	I do most of the time I have the chance	I do every time I have the chance
11. I do free time activities based on my interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. I plan weekend activities that I like to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. I am involved in school-related activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. My friends and I choose activities that we want to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. I write letters, notes or talk on the phone to friends and family.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. I listen to music that I like.	☐	☐	☐	☐

1D. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Community involvement and interaction

1D. Subtotal _____

17. I volunteer in things that I am interested in.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
18. I go to restaurants that I like.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
19. I go to movies, concerts, and dances.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
20. I go shopping or spend time at shopping centers or malls.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
21. I take part in youth groups (like 4-H, scouting, church groups)	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance

1E. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Post-school directions

1E. Subtotal _____

22. I do school and free time activities based on my career interests.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
23. I work on school work that will improve my career chances.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
24. I make long-range career plans.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
25. I work or have worked to earn money.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
26. I am in or have been in career or job classes or training.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
27. I have looked into job interests by visiting work sites or talking to people in that job.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance

1F. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Personal expression

1F. Subtotal _____

28. I choose my clothes and the personal items I use every day.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
29. I choose my own hair style.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
30. I choose gifts to give to family and friends.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
31. I decorate my own room.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance
32. I choose how to spend my personal money.	☐ I do not even if I have the chance	☐ I do sometimes when I have the chance	☐ I do most of the time I have the chance	☐ I do every time I have the chance

Please check Section One, A thru F, to make sure there is only one answer for each question.

Directions:

Each of the following questions tell the beginning of a story and how the story ends. Your job is to tell what happened in the middle of the story, to connect the beginning and the end. Read the beginning and ending for each question, then fill in the BEST answer for the middle of the story. There are no right or wrong answers.

Remember, fill in the one answer that you think BEST completes the story.

2A. Interpersonal cognitive problem-solving

33. **Beginning:** You are sitting in a planning meeting with your parents and teachers. You want to take a class where you can learn to work as a cashier in a store. Your parents want you to take the Family and Child Care class. You can only take one of the classes.

Middle: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ending: The story ends with you taking a vocational class where you will learn to be a cashier.

Story Score _____

34. **Beginning:** You hear a friend talking about a new job opening at the local book store. You love books and want a job. You decide you would like to work at the bookstore.

Middle: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ending: The story ends with you working at the bookstore.

Story Score _____

35. **Beginning:** Your friends are acting like they are mad at you. You are upset about this.

Middle: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ending: The story ends with you and your friends getting along just fine.

Story Score _____

36. **Beginning:** You go to your English class one morning and discover your English book is not in your backpack. You are upset because you need that book to do your homework.

Middle: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ending: The story ends with you using your English book for homework.

Story Score _____

37. **Beginning:** You are in a club at school. The club advisor announces that the club members will need to elect new officers at the next meeting. You want to be the president of the club.

Middle: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ending: The story ends with you being elected as the club president.

Story Score _____

38. **Beginning:** You are at a new school and you don't know anyone. You want to have friends.

Middle: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ending: The story ends with you having many friends at the new school.

Story Score _____

2A Subtotal _____

2B: Goal setting and task performance

Directions:

The next three questions ask about your plans for the future. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. For each question, tell if you have made plans for that outcome and, if so, what those plans are and how to meet them.

39. Where do you want to live after you graduate?

☐ I have not planned for that yet.

☐ I want to live_____

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1)_____
2)_____
3)_____
4)_____

40. Where do you want to work after you graduate?

☐ I have not planned for that yet.

☐ I want to work_____

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1)_____
2)_____
3)_____
4)_____

41. What type of transportation do you plan to use after graduation?

☐ I have not planned for that yet.

☐ I plan to use_____

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2B Subtotal _____

Directions:

Check the answer that BEST describes you.

Choose only one answer for each question.

There are no right or wrong answers.

42. ☐ I usually do what my friends want... or
☐ I tell my friends if they are doing something I don't want to do.

43. ☐ I tell others when I have new or different ideas or opinions... or
☐ I usually agree with other peoples' opinions or ideas.

44. ☐ I usually agree with people when they tell me I can't do something... or
☐ I tell people when I think I can do something that they tell me I can't.

45. ☐ I tell people when they have hurt my feelings... or
☐ I am afraid to tell people when they have hurt my feelings.

46. ☐ I can make my own decisions... or
☐ Other people make decisions for me.

47. ☐ Trying hard at school doesn't do me much good... or
☐ Trying hard at school will help me get a good job.

48. ☐ I can get what I want by working hard... or
☐ I need good luck to get what I want.

49. ☐ It is no use to keep trying because that won't change things... or
☐ I keep trying even after I get something wrong.

50. ☐ I have the ability to do the job I want... or
☐ I cannot do what it takes to do the job I want.

51. ☐ I don't know how to make friends... or
☐ I know how to make friends.

52. ☐ I am able to work with others... or
☐ I cannot work well with others.

53. ☐ I do not make good choices... or
☐ I can make good choices.

54. ☐ If I have the ability, I will be able to get the job I want... or
☐ I probably will not get the job I want even if I have the ability.

55. ☐ I will have a hard time making new friends... or
☐ I will be able to make friends in new situations.

56. ☐ I will be able to work with others if I need to... or
☐ I will not be able to work with others if I need to.

57. ☐ My choices will not be honored... or
☐ I will be able to make choices that are important to me.

Section 3 Subtotal _____

Directions:
Tell whether you think each of these statements describes how you feel about yourself or not. There are no right or wrong answers. Choose only the answer that BEST fits you.

58. I do not feel ashamed of any of my emotions.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	66. I don't accept my own limitations.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
59. I feel free to be angry at people I care for.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	67. I feel I cannot do many things.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
60. I can show my feelings even when people might see me.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	68. I like myself.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
61. I can like people even if I don't agree with them.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	69. I am not an important person.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
62. I am afraid of doing things wrong.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	70. I know how to make up for my limitations.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
63. It is better to be yourself than to be popular.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	71. Other people like me.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
64. I am loved because I give love.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	72. I am confident in my abilities.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree
65. I know what I do best.	☐ Agree	☐ Don't agree	**Section 4 Subtotal** _____		

Scoring Step 1:

Record the raw scores from each section:

Autonomy

1A = ☐
1B = ☐
1C = ☐
1D = ☐
1E = ☐
1F = ☐

Domain Total: ☐

Self-Regulation

2A = ☐
2B = ☐

Domain Total: ☐

Psychological Empowerment

3 = ☐

Domain Total: ☐

Self-Realization

4 = ☐

Domain Total: ☐

Scoring Step 2:

Sum each Domain Total for a Total Score:

Self-Determination Total = ☐

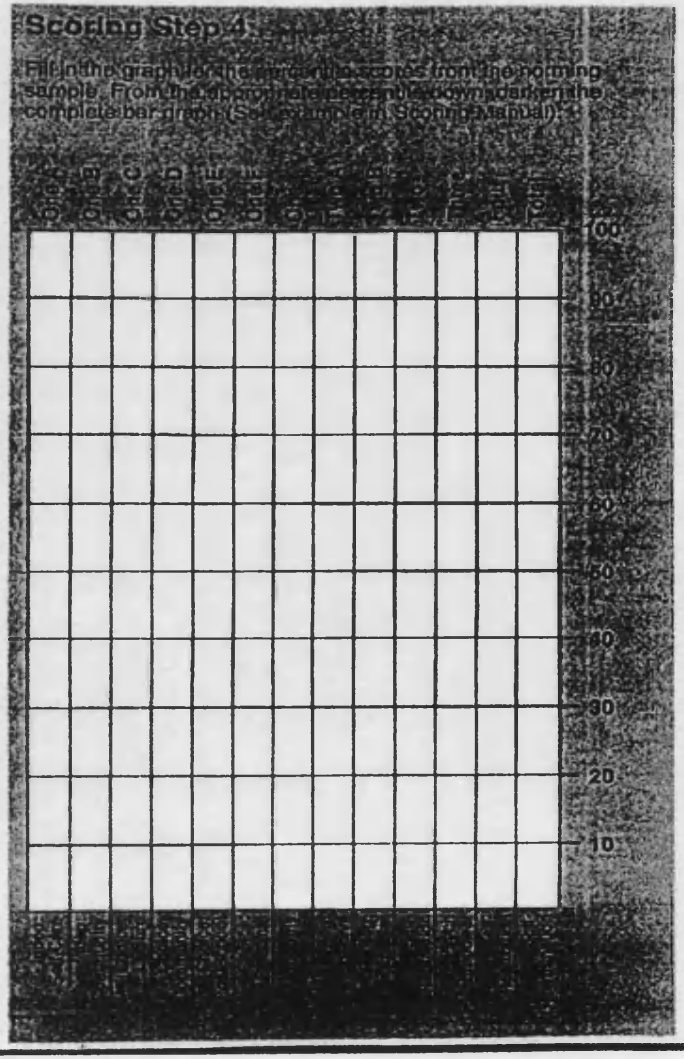
Scoring Step 3:

Using the conversion tables in Appendix A, convert raw scores into percentile scores for comparison with the sample norms (Norm Sample) and the percentage of positive responses (Positive Scores):

	Norm Sample	Positive Scores
Autonomy		
1A =	☐	☐
1B =	☐	☐
1C =	☐	☐
1D =	☐	☐
1E =	☐	☐
1F =	☐	☐
Domain Total:	☐	☐
Self-Regulation		
2A =	☐	☐
2B =	☐	☐
Domain Total:	☐	☐
Psychological Empowerment		
3 =	☐	☐
Domain Total:	☐	☐
Self-Realization		
4 =	☐	☐
Domain Total:	☐	☐
Self-Determination Total Score =	☐	☐

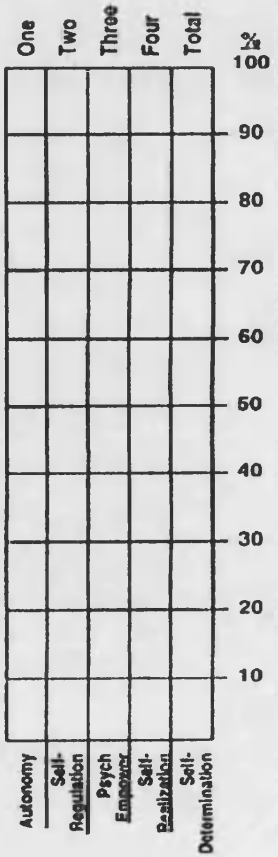
Scoring Step 4:

Fill in the graph for the percentile scores from the norming sample. From the above table, shade in the complete bar graph (Self-Assessment Scoring Manual).



Scoring Step 5:

Fill in the graph for the percentile scores indicating the percent positive responses.



תאריך: 2/2003

Weekly schedule

Grade 10.2

תדפיס תלמ"ש מס' 1 עבור: י2

	sun.	Mon.	Tus.	wed.	thur.	Fri.
	יום א'	יום ב'	יום ג'	יום ד'	יום ה'	יום ו'
0						
1	אנגלית זמיר שרה 1 Eng.	נחיש/ספרו אתי /עובד 1 Emp. project 2/	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	אנגלית זמיר שרה 1 Eng.	תושב"ע עובד יצחק 1 bible	חנ"ג/מחשב חיים/בוכר Gym/comp.
2	תורה בולקא מיכ 1 bible	נביא בן אברהם 1 bible	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	היסטוריה עובד יצחק 1 history	תורה בולקא מיכ 1 bible	חנ"ג/מחשב חיים/בוכר Gym/comp.
3	לשון בולקא מיכ 1 language	חנ"ג/חינו חיים/נהרי gym	מו/מל/פי אק/בל/טו bible	נחיש/הבעה אתי /בולק 2/ 1 Emp. project	מחשב בוכריס חי Comp.	היסטוריה עובד יצחק 1 history
4	נביא בן אברהם 1 bible	חנ"ג/חינו חיים/נהרי gym	מו/מל/פי אק/בל/טו bible	מחשב בוכר/אזוג Comp.	שרטוט סרוסי ברו 1 Tech drawing	תושב"ע עובד יצחק 1 bible
5	ספרות בולקא מיכ 1 Hebrew liter.	חי/שת/מו נה/גל/אק education	יזמות בולקא מיכ 1 School project	לשון אורנ/בולק language	מתמטיקה רו/בן/בו 12 מחשב math	
6	ספרות בולקא מיכ 1 literature	חי/שת/מו נה/גל/אק education	יזמות טרכטנברג 1 School project	אזרחות אורנ/עובד Social stud.	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	
7				שתלנ/מלאכ גלעד/בלאי		
8			After school activities	שתלנ/מלאכ גלעד/בלאי		
9						
10				מלאכת יד בלאי אביב	אתגרים	
11				מלאכת יד בלאי אביב	אתגרים	
12						
13						

תאריך: 2/2003

Weekly scheduale

Grade 10-3

תדפיס תלמ"ש מס' 1 עבור: י3

	יום א'	יום ב'	יום ג'	יום ד'	יום ה'	יום ו'
	sun.	Mon.	Tus.	wed.	thur.	Fri.
0						
1	תורה עובד יצחק bible	נחיש/ספרו אתי /עובד Emp. project 1	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	ספרות עובד יצחק literature	לשון בולקא מיכ language	חנ"ג/דינ י חיים/לסרי bible
2	חברה עזוב ירצחק Social stud.	תורה עובד יצחק bible	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	אנגלית זמיר שרה Eng.	תורה עובד יצחק bible	חנ"ג/דינ י חיים/לסרי bible
3	נביא בן אברהם bible	חנ"ג/חינו חיים/נהרי gym	מו/מל/פי אק/בל/טו	נחיש/הבעה אתי /בולק Emp. project 2/ 1	הבעה עברי בולקא מיכ Hebrew	מחשב בוכריס חי Comp.
4	דינים לסרי יחיא bible 2	חנ"ג/חינו חיים/נהרי gym	מו/מל/פי אק/בל/טו	מחשב בוכר/אזוג Comp.	נביא בן אברהם bible	מחשב בוכריס חי Comp.
5	אנגלית זמיר שרה Eng.	חי/שת/מו נה/גל/אק School project	יזמות בולקא מיכ School project 1	לשון אורנ/בולק language	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	
6	ספרות עובד יצחק literature	חי/שת/מו נה/גל/אק	יזמות טרכטנברג School project 1	אזרחות אורנ/עובד Social stud.	מתמטיקה רוה /בן א math	
7				שתלנ/מלאכ גלעד/בלאי		
8				שתלנ/מלאכ גלעד/בלאי		
9			After school activities			
10				מלאכת יד בלאי אביב		
11				מלאכת יד בלאי אביב		
12						
13						

Interview questions

1. How may years have you been teaching
2. tell me about your teaching experience
3. Have you worked at another school prior to this school
4. How many years in this school, How did you come to this school
5. what is special about this school
6. what are the biggest issues/challenges facing you as a teacher/ and in this school
7. Have you taught immigrant children in the past
8. How long have you been working with immigrant children
9. how many years have you been working with Ethiopian immigrants
10. Have you always been a classroom teacher
11. Do you have any other responsibilities in the school (e.g. program coordinator, assistant in special projects etc.).
12. In your opinion what are the difficulties and why
13. what would you say can improve your teaching, what would help you
14. what can you tell me about the students in this school
15. tell me about your class
16. How would you describe your students
17. what are the things they like to do at school
18. what are the things they dislike
19. If you could change something what would it be
20. How do you feel working with the students
21. What characterizes your students/ how would you describe them
22. How would you describe them compared to other adolescents you know
23. what do they find difficult/ what do they find easy
24. what interests them/ what do they like

25. What is most important to teach them

26. What would you like to change

27. How do you make the lesson interesting

28. Tell me about the activities you initiate in the classroom

29. In which tasks are they successful

30. Do they share their difficulties with you

31. What makes you angry on the job

32. what are your goals

33. Where/how do you see your students five years from today